

PROPOSED FORCE STRUCTURE FOR THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY
TO PERFORM MANEUVER OPERATIONS IN THE LITTORAL
ENVIRONMENT WITHIN THE REGION OF INTEREST

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by

ANTHONY J. EGAN, MAJ, AUSTRALIAN ARMY
B.A., Deakin University, Geelong, Victoria, Australia, 1998

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

Name of Candidate: Major Anthony J. Egan

Thesis Title: The Recommended Force Structure for the Australian Army to Conduct
Maneuver Operations in the Littoral Environment in the Region of Interest

Approved by:

_____, Thesis Committee Chair
LTC Louis A. Dimarco, M.A., M.M.A.S

_____, Member
LtCol Colonel Colin G. Magee, M.A.

_____, Member
Harold S. Orenstein, Ph.D.

Accepted this 18th day of June 2004 by:

_____, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.

The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

THE RECOMMENDED FORCE STRUCTURE FOR THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY TO CONDUCT MANEUVER OPERATIONS IN THE LITTORAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE REGION OF INTEREST, by MAJ Anthony J. Egan, 91 pages.

At the commencement of the twenty-first century Australia finds itself questioning the employment of its military and once again seeking to define its role in an environment characterized by threats from nonstate actors and the advent of successive coalition wars in the Middle East. The world, and in particular Australia's region is characterized by areas of complex terrain in which jungle and increasingly urban terrain figure prominently. However, the need to meet the national interests in an operational environment of terrorism and regional threats while performing the dual concepts of Maneuver operations in the Littoral Environment (MOLE) and control operations doctrine requires a more robust force structure to meet those threats. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the doctrine of MOLE and control operations against a regional threat and to develop force structure recommendations to conduct MOLE in the complex terrain of Australia's region of interest.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Strategic Framework

At the commencement of the twenty-first century Australia finds itself reassessing the employment of its military, seeking to define its role, and responding to the threats of nonstate actors and the advent of coalition style warfare. Over the past forty years successive Australian governments have provided strategic direction for the military and focused doctrine and strategic guidance on fighting mid- to high-level intensity conventional war. Australia's decisions to deploy its military forces have been based on a criterion of either "Forward Defence" or "Defence of Australia." Australia's recent successful contributions to coalition operations in the Middle East and the South East Asian region have been motivated by a more difficult to define criterion, namely, "the Defense of Australia's Interests."

Clearly Australia has a desire to participate on the international stage, and the recent defense document, *Defence 2000 (D2000): Our Future Defence Force*, articulates the government's desire to "sustain a brigade deployed on operations while maintaining at least a battalion group available for deployment elsewhere" (Australian Government 2000, xiv). The same document outlined Australia's national interests in the form of Australia's strategic interests, objectives and priorities. It is prudent to take a moment to consider these priorities in view of recent changes within the global security environment. The government listed its interests and objectives in priority order as follows: "Ensure the defence of Australia and its direct approaches, foster the security of our immediate neighborhood, promote stability and cooperation in southeast Asia,

support strategic stability in the wider Asia Pacific region, and support global security” (Australian Government 2000, 30). While the impact of the attacks on 11 September 2001 in the United States and 12 October 2002 in Bali have significantly altered the global security environment, they have also altered Australia’s responsibilities within it. The threat of terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction have forced the Australian government to recognize that the biggest threat, and therefore Australia’s greatest responsibility, lies within the region

Australia’s endorsed concept for conflict in the region, maneuver operations in the littoral environment (MOLE), presents a dilemma for force structure designers and policy makers now confronted with emerging nonstate regional threats. The purpose of this thesis is to offer force structure recommendations that meet the requirements of the Army to defend the nation’s “interests” and execute MOLE.

Complicating the challenge is the nature of the environment within Australia’s region of interest (ROI). For the purpose of this thesis the ROI is an area bordered by the nations of the Philippines to the north, Indonesia to the west, and Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the Solomon Islands to the east. Complex terrain dominates the ROI, whether it is the close jungle terrain of Indonesia, the PNG highlands, or the urban terrain of the major primate cities of Manila and Jakarta. To successfully conduct military operations within any of these types of terrain is difficult, even more so for a force that is not equipped or sufficiently trained for the tasks. The Army has long recognized the utility of cross training to achieve success in a variety of terrains or levels of operations. However, the changed operating environment and threat within the ROI require investigation to arrive at a suitable formula for determining force structure. The MOLE concept is

acknowledged by the Army and accepted by government as the Army's contribution to the joint fight within the ROI, however, it does not determine the force structure to effectively performs its actions.

A partial response to this complication is the "Army development concept for control operations" (Future Land Warfare Branch 2002, A2). Dr Russell Glenn of the RAND Corporation, writing in "Meeting Every Urban Challenge" his draft review of the Australian Army's development concept for control operations, notes,

The Australian Defence Force's (ADF) deployment to Somalia put its diggers in the town of Baidoa. The largest deployment in the nation's recent history found Dili, the capital of East Timor, a primary focus. The country's soldiers did well both in Africa and closer to home, but urban operations' historical challenges made themselves apparent. Command and control was often decentralized. The density of civilians and structures made effective communications at once essential and difficult. Armed engagements demanded almost instantaneous decisions; a wrong choice could leave a fellow soldier or a noncombatant dead. The new security strategy [force projection] would require another concept to assist in dealing with these and urban operations' many other formidable tasks. (Glenn 2003, ix)

However, the need to meet the national interests in an operational environment of terrorism and regional threats while performing the dual concepts of MOLE and control operations doctrine requires a more robust force structure to meet those threats. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the doctrine of MOLE and control operations against a regional threat and to develop recommendations for a future force structure for operations in complex terrain within the region. Therefore, to establish a frame of reference for the reader, the concepts of MOLE and control operations are first discussed in broad terms. Chapter 1 then outlines the format of the thesis and relevant literature and concludes with a discussion of the research methodology.

MOLE Concept

The MOLE concept developed from an identified requirement in D2000. By identifying the need for a force capable of service within Australia's ROI, the Army sought to satisfy the guidance of D2000 and yet produce a force capable of service across the broad spectrum of conflict. The concept received broad support from the Army. In a 2002 presentation to the National Press Club in Canberra, Chief Of Army (CA) Lieutenant General Peter Leahy stated, "[t]he Army believes that forces structured for littoral maneuver will possess the ingredients for success across the likely spectrum of future conflict" (2002). The key to the MOLE doctrine is, that it was developed to articulate a concept for operations within littoral regions where Australia could anticipate deploying its forces. It does not describe a concept of operations or offensive or defensive doctrine; rather it "describes how land forces in the future could be employed as part of a joint force within the immediate neighbourhood" (Willis 2002, 2).

The concept is summarized from the concept thesis as follows:

The MOLE concept relies on rapid and simultaneous actions against an adversary to create shock--a state of command paralysis that renders an adversary incapable of making an effective response. This concept can be employed either proactively or reactively. . . .The MOLE concept has four actions which may be conducted concurrently or, at times, consecutively--they are Shaping, Entry from Air and Sea, Decisive Action and Transition. The intent is to make the movement between these actions as rapid and smooth as possible. The five key requirements for the MOLE concept are: Excellent intelligence preparation; rapid fusion and sharing of information across an integrated Joint C3I system; the ability to conduct simultaneous landings; the ability to reachback; and generating overwhelming fighting power to achieve decision. (Willis 2002, ii)

The MOLE concept in its original form, therefore, does not anticipate the conduct of decisive actions in any particular form. It does, however, envisage that any decisive action will seek to maintain the momentum achieved by a successful entry. Figure 1

refers to this and acknowledges the continuous nature of MOLE. Maintaining momentum may include actions that further generate shock. Given the increasing prevalence of urban fringes along the littoral regions of the world, operations in complex terrain will figure prominently in those actions.

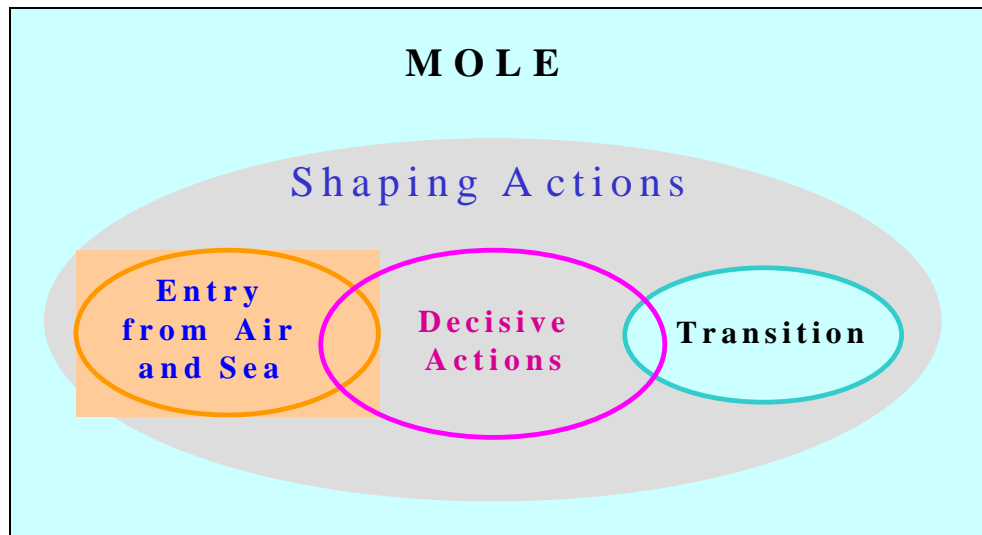


Figure 1. MOLE Continuum of Actions

Source: Paul Willis, MOLE Concept Thesis, Future Land Warfare Branch, Canberra, ACT

MOLE is likely to involve urban operations and it is “therefore essential that combat capabilities are developed to deny this terrain to an adversary” (Sanders 2002). It is therefore appropriate that some analysis of the force structure to conduct complex operations as a decisive action of the MOLE is conducted, especially when considered in concert with control operations.

Control Operations

Control operations, like MOLE, are an emerging concept within the Australian Defense Forces (ADF). Control operations are “military operations that lead to the manipulation of people’s activities and the flow of information within the urban area” (Sanders 2002, A4). Control operations acknowledge that shaping the civilian population is as important as shaping the enemy. Success is measured equally by successful operations against a foe and the ability of the friendly force to convince the civilian population that their best interests are served by accepting the friendly force’s strategic objectives as their own. Tactical actions against the enemy are linked to the psychological shaping operations against the civilian population. In effect, the force that successfully shapes the civilian inhabitants stands a greater chance of success. This in itself is an indicator of force structure for the Army and suggests that civil-military operations teams (CMOT) will play an important role in control operations within the urban environment.

The authors of the control operations concept define shaping operations as follows: “Shaping actions are those taken to set the pre-conditions for the successful application of force. Shaping actions at the strategic and operational levels will set the pre-conditions for success within the operational theatre. Of greatest importance will be the management of the local population’s perceptions to elicit their support for the conduct of operations against an adversary” (Sanders 2002, A16).

The development of the control operations concept, like the MOLE concept, helps define the capabilities that the ADF will be able to field within the region. Control operations envisage a conflict that requires technical dominance to overcome “the clutter that is characteristic of urban terrain” (Sanders 2002, A12). To overcome this clutter

technology may not be the only answer. Success will require technical dominance coupled with a balanced force capable of operational effectiveness.

Thesis Format

The primary research question this thesis will investigate is, “What is the optimal force structure of an Australian brigade conducting MOLE in region?” This question incorporates several secondary questions to inform force structure for future operations in the region:

1. Is the control operations concept complementary to the MOLE concept for the successful conduct of operations in the ROI, particularly in complex urban terrain?

2. How is the ROI defined in terms of state and government organizations, civil agencies, population, geography, and threats?

3. Does current Australian strategic guidance reflect global changes as a result of the war on terror and what, if any, are changes required in force structure to operate against those threats?

4. How can recent experiences of the US Army and Marine Corps, United Kingdom, and French Armies inform Australian Army doctrine and structuring of forces for the performance of MOLE in the ROI?

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 contains the definition of the research question, provides background on the dual concepts of MOLE and control operations, discusses the relevant literature, sets out the research method, and discusses the structure of the remaining chapters. Chapter 2 defines the region and the threat and establishes the framework for the force structure analysis. The implications of changed strategic guidance from the government and the continuing applicability of the MOLE

concept to drive improvements in Army capability for the conduct of operations in the region and the wider region are addressed in chapter 3. MOLE will be assessed against government guidance “that future capabilities will take into account the new strategic environment to ensure a more flexible, mobile force with sufficient levels of readiness and sustainment to achieve outcomes in the national interest” (Hill 2003, 24). It will focus on the continuing suitability of the MOLE concept and will assess that against the threat to determine force structure and recommendations for change.

Chapter 4 analyzes the planned future force structure of the Army and its continuing ability to contribute to the MOLE concept in a joint environment. Implications of changed strategic guidance from the government due to increases in the threat both regionally and in the wider region will be applied and recommendations made. Examples of structure that have been employed by other nations conducting similar types of operations will be assessed for their applicability in future force structures of the Army. Finally, in chapter 5, a future force structure that enables the conduct of MOLE either within the ROI or in support of commitments to coalitions in the wider region will be recommended. Conclusions and recommendations will ultimately inform future doctrine and force structure. Criteria for assessment during chapters three and four are based on government guidance contained in *Australia’s National Security: A Defence Update 2003*, the guidance directs that future forces are required to be more flexible, and mobile with higher levels of readiness and sustainability.

Literature Review

Dr. Russell Glenn’s *Meeting Every Urban Challenge: A Review of the Australian Army Development Concept for Control Operations-Draft* is a key document for the

conduct of analysis, particularly when discussing the relevance of control operations for the conduct of urban operations. This work has been commissioned by the ADF Defence Science and Technology Organization (DSTO) and is particularly relevant to the author's thesis, as it identifies deficiencies within the current force structure and future force projections against a near peer threat. Dr Glenn an urban operations analyst from the RAND Corporation, notes his concern during his summary, stating: "The doubts are few for contingencies involving limited threats and urban areas of lesser size and population. Given confrontation with a near peer competitor in a town or city of virtually any size, however, and those concerns increase exponentially" (2003, xv).

Literature allowing a careful construction of the threat within the region includes Robert Kaplan's, *The Coming Anarchy*, Bruce Hoffman's (Rand) *Preparing for War on Terrorism*, and Robert Bunker's *Non-State Threats and Future Wars*. These texts will contribute to research of chapter 2, defining the environment, and chapter 4, the future. Additionally Stanley Brunn and Jack Williams *Cities of the World*, World Regional Urban Development will contribute to an understanding of the region and the infrastructure and apparatus of state.

Government documents, such as the recently released *Australia's National Security A Defence Update 2003* and the *Defence Capability Review 2003*, contribute to the analysis on the continuing applicability of the MOLE concept, given global changes in the threat. The government notes that, because of recent changes in Australia's strategic environment as a result of the "stabilizing effect of US determination and willingness to act" (Hill 2003, 23), there is less likely to be a need for ADF operations in defense of Australia. Rather, the government envisages that for the foreseeable future any

ADF operations are likely to occur within the context of regional contingencies, the war on terror, and efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), or to otherwise enhance global security and stability (Hill 2003, 25).

Literature allowing consideration of topics as either comparison or contrast include doctrinal examples from the United States Marine Corps (USMC) for both military operations in urban terrain (MOUT) and expeditionary maneuver warfare. Recent operational studies that focus on force structure and doctrine and tactics in urban and littoral regions, will also be useful. Documents from the US Department of Defense (joint doctrine) and the American, British, Canadian, Australian Armies Standardization Program (ABCA) provide an example of like nations doctrine. It is planned to apply these doctrinal constructs to assist in developing recommendations for Australian doctrine. There are also a number of after-action reviews (AARs) and lessons learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and related journal and Internet articles focusing on threat, structure, and concepts, all of which will be useful research material for subsequent analysis.

Research Method.

The thesis analyzes the primary question by identifying the key concepts that support MOLE within the ROI. These concepts are introduced and then assessed for suitability against a threat that can realistically be expected within the region. The thesis will focus on establishing a definitive description of where Australia's regional interests lie (South East Asia and the Pacific Rim are the areas of primary focus). Recent operations and alliance partner joint concepts will also be reviewed for applicability to Australia's force structure. Chapter 2 commences with a discussion of the key countries

and major urban areas of the ROI. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the major security threats that exist within the ROI.

CHAPTER 2

REGION OF INTEREST

The Australian government has demonstrated its resolve to act strategically by recent contributions to the ‘coalition of the willing;’ however, it is also equally committed to seeking solutions other than force when attempting to solve diplomatic crises within the region. The argument that changes in the international system will reduce the importance of force in relations between nations over the coming years is noted within D2000; however, this position does not account for the emergence of nonstate actors over the past five years. D2000 notes: “The Government does not dismiss these views, and indeed it places a high priority on working with others, at both the regional and global level, to further minimize, and if possible to eliminate the risk of war. The continuing threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction makes these efforts all the more important” (Hill, D2000, 2000, 9).

The purpose of this chapter is to develop an understanding of littoral urbanization within the Asia-Pacific region and to identify threats and nonstate actors active within the region. The chapter will begin by defining the region and the wider region. Secondly the chapter will examine major nations within the region, their principal agencies of government, geography, physical features and characteristics, state institutions, and civil agencies. Thirdly the chapter will identify the principal urban centers within the region and identify the layout, size, demographics, influences, and institutions within the city. To conclude, the threats that exist in the major nations shall be discussed. The discussion will involve outlining the type of organization background, capabilities, and the

individual methods of operating. Understanding the operating environment as detailed in the chapter will provide defense planners a frame of reference when considering force structure implications in the future. Those implications will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

Defining Australia's Region

Australia's region has experienced considerable change in recent years. This includes: firstly, the increased importance of southeast Asia (SE ASIA) as a powerful global economic trading zone; secondly, the increased military capability of a number of former colonial outposts; and thirdly, the increased religious fundamentalism-linked terrorism within the region. Major population centers in Indonesia and the Philippines have continued to grow disproportionately to the national population as a whole. Jakarta's population has expanded tenfold over the period from 1950 to 2000, whereas Indonesia's population expanded only fivefold over the same period.

Australia's ROI is a triangular-shaped area with the Philippines located at the point of the triangle. Running from the point east and west are two lines that encompass the nations of Fiji, the Solomon's, and PNG to the east and Indonesia and East Timor to the west. The base of the triangle encompasses the region to Australia's immediate north. Figure 2 indicates the area discussed. Australia's wider region is inclusive of the areas of north Asia, east Asia, and the Middle East and includes countries such as South Korea, Japan, Afghanistan, Iraq, India, and Pakistan.

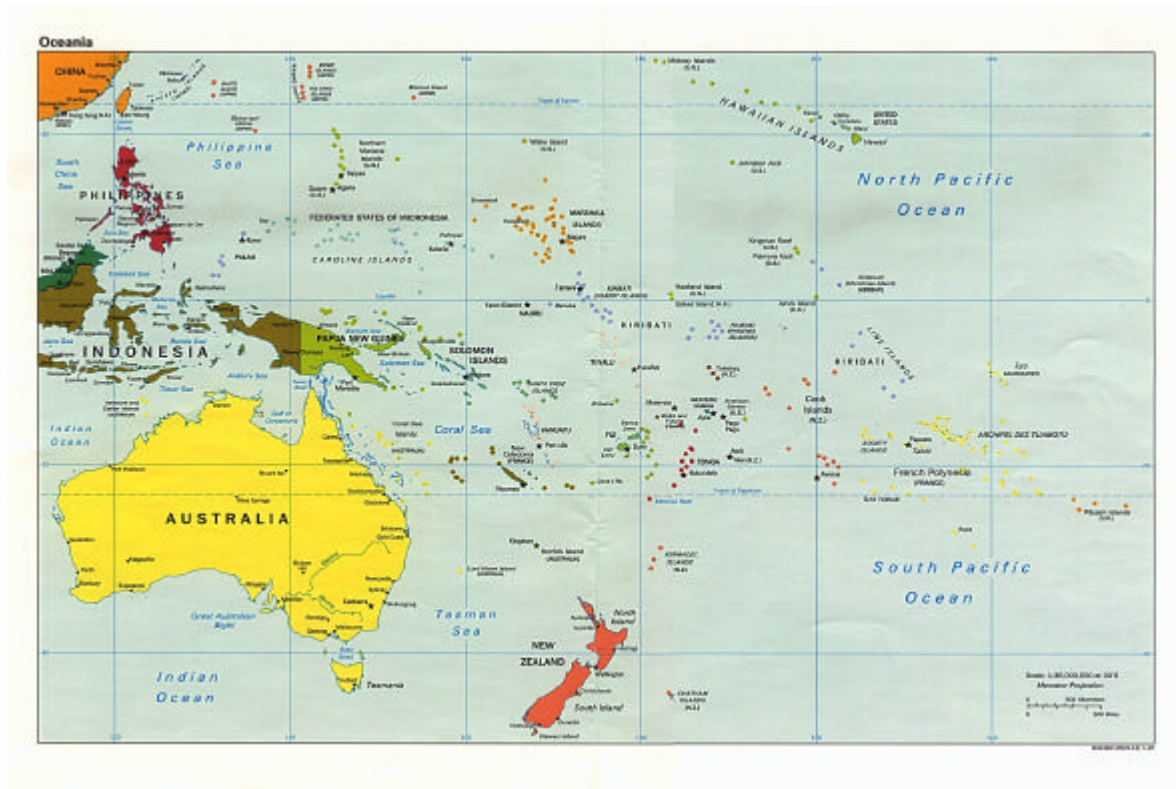


Figure 2. Australia's Region of Interest

Source: University of Texas, Oceania Map [Website] available from http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/islands_oceans_poles/oceania_pol_97.jpg; Internet; accessed on 1 March 2004.

According to Barry Buzan, in *People States and Fear*, “The institutions of the state comprise the entire machinery of government, including its executive, legislative, administrative and judicial bodies, and the laws, procedures and norms by which they operate” (1991, 82). The institutions mentioned by Buzan are perhaps more vulnerable to threats from within than they are to threats of direct attack from outside the country. This internal threat is very capable of causing a state of instability to exist. The insurgent groups operating within the Philippines and other religiously motivated groups within SE Asia are examples of these types of internal threats (Buzan, 1991, 87).

The region to be discussed includes the subregions of Oceania and SE Asia; however, it does not include discussion on the cities of east Asia, north Asia, or the Middle East. Considering each subregion and its major cities will assist in the analysis of the institutions of the state that could support ADF operations, and illuminate deficiencies in the major urban areas of the region. Understanding the environmental characteristics of the region, coupled with the threat groups that exist within the region, enables the ADF to plan for contingencies within the region and make informed decisions on force structure.

Oceania

Papua New Guinea

The major cities of the subregion of Oceania are the major cities of Australia and New Zealand. These two countries will not be covered any further within this chapter. The key countries of concern to Australia and New Zealand within this subregion are the island nations of New Guinea and the Solomon's, and the island province of Bougainville. All three have a common history with Australia; however, due to the vicious fighting that occurred from 1941 to 1944 along the Owen Stanley Ranges and the famous "Kokoda Trail," New Guinea ties are felt the strongest historically.

Papua New Guinea has a population of approximately five million, of which approximately one million live in urban areas. Its total land mass is 462,840 square kilometers, which is equivalent to the size of California. By comparison the coastline is only 5,152 kilometers, and over 98 percent of the country is forest or jungle.

Port Moresby is located on the south coast of the country at the east end of the Gulf of Papua, (see figure 3) and has a population of just over one million people. The main town straddles a series of headlands surrounding the natural harbor and is generally

elevated. A small amount of flat land is located at Boroko four miles away from the city, and houses the shopping areas and the international airport. To cater for the rapid expansion of the city the satellite township of Waigani has been established eight miles away from the coast and is linked by a multilane boulevard. The government's offices are located here, as well as numerous diplomatic missions. The increase in migration to the urban areas of Port Moresby has also witnessed an increase in squatting and shantytowns along the coast.

The most common religion within PNG is Christianity, though the tribal groups have a number of tribe-specific religions and languages. Physical characteristics of tribal groups vary widely, and over 870 distinct languages are spoken throughout the country. The diversity of the population and the variation in density pose a number of unique political challenges. The political system is based on a modified Westminster model, with only one house of parliament. Representatives are elected for a five-year term and are loosely aligned to a political parties, though allegiance to a particular ideology is weak

New Guinea provides some difficulty for the Australian government due to the level of unrest, continued aid, and the continued expectation of aid that flows in from Australia. John Howard's Liberal government has done more than any recent government to enforce accountability on the various governments of New Guinea. The problems that have arisen within New Guinea are not surprising, given the speed at which independence came. The problems manifested themselves prior to, and soon after formal independence in 1975.



Figure 3. Papua New Guinea

Source: Asia Source, New Guinea Map [Website]; available from <http://www.asiasource.org/profiles/ap-mp-03>; Internet; accessed on 9 February 2004.

A. James Rose, writing in *Cities of the World, World Urban Regional Development*, noted: “Papua New Guinea (PNG) is engaged in the task of transforming its society literally from the stone-age conditions to integration in the modern world within two generations. The Australians barely laid the necessary infrastructure of communications and transport links and the rule of law and development of local government and education systems when independence over took the country” (1983, 189).

D2000 reflected the government’s concerns are reflected in D2000, “Australia will continue to offer substantial support to Papua New Guinea (PNG) defense reform. Australian assistance to help stabilize the Papua New Guinea Defense Force (PNGDF) in the short-term will be linked to the long-term reform of the force” (2000, 43). The government’s continued support clearly anticipates a PNGDF that is loyal and responsive

to political control (2000, 43). Australian governments have demanded greater accountability from the PNG government, yet Australia continues to maintain a substantial presence diplomatically and economically. PNG is resource rich and Australian companies continue to mine gold and copper from the highland regions. Military presence within PNG is limited to a small staff that coordinates military exchanges and training activities. PNG remains an important component of the region for Australia, and because of that, the social unrest that exists in Port Moresby is of primary concern. This concern has necessitated significant ADF planning for a services-protected evacuation (SPE) and services-assisted evacuation (SAE) from Port Moresby harbor and airport.

The threat that exists within Port Moresby is a microcosm of the threat that exists with PNG in general. Difficulties of language and culture clash with the warrior lifestyle and are played out between coastal man and highlander, Papuan against New Guinean (Rose 1983, 189). PNG is one of the most heterogeneous nations, with over 300 different community groups. Port Moresby is predominantly ethnic New Guinean, the only distinction being whether an individual is rural or urban, however the diversity of community affiliations is very important.

The primary threat group is the “Rascals,” a grouping of violent unemployed rural men and boys who prey on the international elements that support foreign government investment and programs within PNG. The Rascals employ tactics similar to other gang-oriented groups in the US: car jackings, violent home invasions, street robberies, rape, and intimidation. Most foreign governments have established their personnel inside security compounds that are patrolled by private security firms. The Rascals are an

unsophisticated group that lacks formal training and access to weapon systems; however, a change in tactics that targets law enforcement and military compounds may be successful and provide these groups with a limited number of handguns and semi automatic weapons. If this occurs the Australian government may be forced to take action to protect its citizens and investments in the country. Mass personnel evacuation by the ADF is nothing new in the region. A successful evacuation, as conducted from Honiara in the Solomon's in 2000, is a contingency that has been war-gamed in the past number of years by the ADF.

Solomon Islands

In the past four years the ADF has conducted two SPE operations from the Solomon Islands and the Army is currently involved in a peace stabilization mission, having intervened at the request of the Solomon Islands government. The force, named the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) and comprised of 2,220 personnel drawn from the ADF, the Australian Federal police, the Australian Protective Services, and regional defense forces, entered Honiara on 24 July 2003.

The east Solomon Islands are a chain of six large and numerous small tropical islands located 300 miles to the east of PNG. The islands were established as a British protectorate in 1893, and following the Anglo-German agreement of 1899, the west Solomon Islands (Bougainville and Baku) became part of German New Guinea. The Solomon Islands were the scene of some of the bloodiest battles of World War II between the occupying Japanese forces and the liberating allied forces. Interim self-government was instituted in 1976 and independence was granted in July 1978. The Solomon Islands has a population of just under 500,000, predominately ethnic Melanesian people. The

population is concentrated on the Island of Guadalcanal, and, apart from the major urban center of Honiara, where over 65,000 people live, most of the population lives along the coastal fringes of the islands. The principal organized religion is Christianity, and most of the major European religions are represented.

Ethnic tensions on the island have simmered for some decades; however, it escalated to dangerous levels late in 1998. The principal protagonists are the native Solomon Islands group; the Isatabu Freedom Movement, who are Melanesian; and the native Malaitan Islands residents, the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF), who are Polynesian. The MEF are settlers from neighboring islands who have settled on Honiara and its environs, drawn by the lure of greater economic opportunities (DFAT Solomon Islands Country Brief, 3). In this regard the urban migration is very similar to the population increases that occurred in Jakarta and Manila. The landscape is a mixture of open farmland and vegetable areas with some regions of heavy vegetation.

The situation on the Solomon Islands has continued to deteriorate over the past five years and has necessitated the intervention by RAMSI. RAMSI's mission is to restore law and order to the islands and to create an environment in which the effective functioning of the lawful Solomon Islands democratic institutions and services can recommence (DFAT Solomon Islands Country Brief, 4). Australia's intervention at the request of the lawful Solomon Islands government has confirmed the legitimacy of Australia's actions and its intent to intervene to effect positive outcomes within the ROI. Militarily, the commitment effectively forestalls the possibility of a further slide into lawlessness and the possible negative impact on neighboring islands, such as

Bougainville. The action confirms the Australian government's commitment to acting preemptively when it serves its best interests within the region.

Fiji

The final country to be considered from Oceania is Fiji. Fiji lies approximately 2,700 kilometers north east of Sydney, Australia. It comprises four major islands and over 800 small islands and atolls. It has a land area of 18,333 square kilometers, divided predominantly between the two main islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The population is just under one million people. The country is characterized by racial diversity, the principal ethnic groups being ethnic Fijians, who account for a little over 51 percent of the population, and Indians, who account for approximately 44 percent. The Indians originally came to the islands as indentured labor to work the vast sugar cane fields in the late 1870s. The capital city of Suva is located on the island of Viti Levu. A cultural class system exists in Fiji due to the fact that a majority of native Fijians refused to work as laborers to develop the nation's resources. As Rose notes, "Native Fijians and the descendants of the Indians have maintained a rather high degree of social and locational distance ever since. Indigenous Fijians express a preference for rural environments and are protected by law in that they alone have rights of land ownership. The Indo-Fijians may lease and cultivate land, but are most active in commerce and small industrial activities . . . the indigenous people have somewhat of a strangle hold on employment in the government service and the military forces" (1983, 193).

The undercurrent of tensions that results from this overt rivalry has resulted in one successful coup in 1987 and one unsuccessful coup attempt in 2001. Power has transitioned back to the people, yet the rules on land ownership continue to hinder the

democratic process and could cause a similar rise in tension in the future. The situation in Fiji and the threat to Australian citizens are of concern to the Australian government due to the number of companies, such as Colonial Sugar Refineries, which operate facilities and offices in Fiji. Regardless of the fact that the two recent coups have not resulted in loss of life, there is a potential threat to ADF personnel if the Fijian Armed Forces ever opposes foreign evacuation operations. Fiji's Army is an infantry-based force of one brigade with additional combat support and combat service support, which is well led and very experienced due to extensive peacekeeping service in the Middle East since the early 1980s. The Fijians were reportedly dug in on the beaches around Suva in 1987, ready to repel any attempted landings by Australian forces during "Operation Moris Dance," which was the Australian government's military response to the 1987 coup and involved the deployment of a company of infantry in four surface vessels.

Intensive diplomatic negotiations ensued to prevent the use of force, as the instigators of the coup guaranteed the safety of Australians and other foreign nationals (Horner 1990, 307).

The requirement to be prepared to conduct a services protected or assisted evacuation (NEO) within the Pacific region from cities such as Port Moresby, Suva, and Honiara remains. Recent operations in the Solomon's and East Timor have proven the ADF is capable of mounting amphibious operations. In such an event it is likely that political and social unrest will be rife and the potential for aggressors to retaliate against ADF forces or Australian citizens exists. In such a situation, a capable force, structured to achieve the fundamentals of command and control, mobility, and protection, is a

constant. Firepower and maneuver are not, and would require careful consideration at the time of planning.

Southeast Asia

SE Asia is a region that includes the nations of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Singapore. “Southeast Asia is principally an agrarian based society. It is one of the least urbanized regions in the world and yet the growth rate of urban places is much higher than the population growth rate. In 1950 only two cities had a population over one million. By 1980 there were eleven” (Brunn and Williams 1983, 371). The major cities of the region are Jakarta, Manila, Bangkok, Hanoi, and Singapore. Their rapid growth plagued the development of infrastructure and services as large numbers of migrating rural workers flocked from the outlying areas, only to discover that employment was difficult to find, especially if they were unskilled (Brunn and Williams 1983, 372).

The rapid influx of people from the rural areas into the largest Asian cities has contributed significantly to the increased populations and expansive shantytowns along the urban fringes of cities of Jakarta and Manila. The problems associated with expanding urban centers and the subsequent strain on infrastructure has preoccupied the governments of Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines. The additional pressure of achieving a resolution to separatist and insurgent movements has left more vulnerable in the region. Member nations of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) are highly conscious of their growing vulnerability to Chinese military power and yet are still unwilling to establish a shared security dialogue to combat it. Indonesia and the Philippines are committed to seeking military solutions to the serious internal security problems that threaten to undermine the fabric of their nations. In the process both are

ignoring nonmilitary initiatives, such as dialogue, that may assist in removing the internal threat and allow the development of a shared response with other members of ASEAN to the Chinese threat.

According to the Australian government, the stability of the SE Asia region is underpinned by ASEAN. ASEAN in its infancy envisaged a forum that would provide stability by its existence. Member nations, through the medium of political dialogue, sought to solve conflicts diplomatically. As noted in D2000: “ASEAN continues to provide focus for the sense of shared interests and common goals which has been so important to SE Asia over recent decades” (Australian Government 2000, 20). Yet the inclusion of a nonintervention clause that prevents one nation interfering in the internal affairs of another has undermined the treaty from the outset. The reluctance to intervene has forced other non-ASEAN nations to intervene within the region

Indonesia

Indonesia is an important nation within SE Asia due in part to its population size and in part to its position astride the major straits separating the Indian and Pacific oceans (see figure 4). The major city within Indonesia is Jakarta, and like most of urban SE Asia “it is a blend of cultural influences which have affected urbanism. Influences from Indians, the Chinese, Arabs, Europeans, and more recently, the Americans and Japanese have shaped the material form and the cultural milieu of the cities” (Brunn and Williams 1983, 372). The population of Indonesia is approximately 232 million, of whom forty-five million live in urban areas. The population is predominantly Javanese, Maduran, and Balinese, the islands of which are home to almost two-thirds of the population. Indonesia comprises 17,500 islands of varied size and character. The predominant religion is Islam,

though the religious practices of the many islands and villages differ according to local traditions and customs. The total surface area is almost two million square kilometers, with fifty-four thousand kilometers of coastline. Forest and jungles cover over eighty percent of the country. Figure 4 graphically depicts Indonesia and its various islands.

Jakarta is heavily influenced by colonial architectural characteristics of the Portuguese and Dutch that served as a model for its development over the past five hundred years. A rapidly expanding city of eleven million people, it suffers from deficient infrastructure, a problem that is common to many other large SE Asian cities. The predicted population in 2015 is expected to be over seventeen million. Waste disposal, water, power, buildings, and telecommunications all require improvement, though funding for such ventures is difficult to identify as the government continues to struggle against burgeoning internal security problems in a number of states.



Figure 4. Indonesia

Source: Asia Source, Indonesia Map [Website]; available from <http://www.asiasource.org/profiles/ap-mp03>; Internet; accessed on 9 February 2004.

It is the emergence of nonstate threats within Indonesia that is the greatest concern to the Indonesian authorities. As Tim Huxley notes in his *Insecurity in the*

ASEAN Region thesis, “Indonesian defense policy remains pre-occupied with internal security problems: the armed forces still see external threats as remote and minimal” (1993, 56). The government is clearly concerned with the current number of separatist and autonomy movements within Aceh, Ambon, and West Papua, and the recent East Timorese solution yet appears unable to prevent the spread of militant Islam within the nation, encouraged by recent successful terrorist acts within SE Asia countries.

Certainly it is in the interests of the US and Australia for Indonesia to tackle the increased threat posed by the rise of militant fundamentalism within the country, however, until the Bali bombing this was not a priority. A moderate Muslim Indonesia is a far greater contributor to regional security than a fragmented society intent on preserving internal security while ignoring the threat posed to the region by acts of terror. Improved human rights may pave the way for regional solutions that are acceptable to the Indonesian government and the separatist groups alike. For Australia and the United States, dealing with Indonesia as a regional power with its provinces intact makes more sense strategically than supporting piecemeal separatist independence claims against Indonesia.

A possible catalyst for the rise of terrorism within Indonesia has been the loose links established between some members of Jamar Islamiah (JI) and members of al Qaeda. Those links are traced back to common training of individuals from both groups received in Afghanistan. As Reyko Huang and Colin McCullough, writing for the Center for Defence Information, note in their article *In the Spotlight Jemaah Islamiah*,

Investigating the terrorist network in Southeast Asia reveals why the global war on terrorism may have yet to see its most difficult phases. Here one finds scattered but substantial pieces of evidence that several radical Islamic groups,

overcoming national and geographical barriers, have maintained deep and long-running ties with one another toward a shared fundamentalist goal. Their clandestine, elusive "cells" are dispersed throughout everyday-life places, functions, and businesses, rendering Afghanistan-style military campaigns impractical. Furthermore, many of these organizations forged partnerships with al Qaeda long before authorities began unearthing the scale of their transnational reach. JI is at the core of this extensive, complex, and resilient terrorist labyrinth in Southeast Asia. (2002, 2)

Though D2000 noted the emergence of intrastate conflict as a cause for concern, no recognition was made of the emergence of nonstate actors, such as Osama Bin Laden's al Qaeda, as a threat to peace and stability within the region. His principal agents of terror within Australia's direct area of influence have been JI. A recent article in the BBC News noted:

JI formed in the mid-1980s by two Indonesian clerics, evolved its terrorist edge in the mid-1990s when one of its founders, the late Abdullah Sungkar, established contact with Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaeda network. . . . The JI's principal goals are the establishment of Islamic governments across the region followed by the formation of a unified South East Asian Islamic state. This state would stretch from southern Thailand, through the Malay Peninsula (including Singapore), across the Indonesian archipelago and into the southern Philippines. (Wright BBC News August 15, 2003)

Indonesia must act in defense of global security, as the acts of violence perpetrated by JI operatives have dragged the international spotlight onto the region. As Huang and McCullough note, "The region's own initiatives remain the single most crucial factor in controlling terrorism in Southeast Asia. Indeed, with the exception of Indonesia, which has been criticized from abroad for its irresolute participation in the global effort, the region's countries have generally acted rapidly and effectively in response to the needs of the new security environment" (2002, 3).

Australia has acted in its own interests within the region and engaged actively with the nations of SE Asia more effectively since the labor government of Bob Hawke

came to power in 1983. The Indonesian government has accepted Australia's renewed interest in SE Asia with suspicion and on occasion has been critical of Australia's motives. That suspicion is partly due to Australia's strong ties with the US and poor diplomacy by successive Australian governments towards Asia.

Regardless, Indonesia's position astride the Straits of Malacca and the continued investment within Indonesia by Australian companies necessitate a secure and stable Indonesia. The threat posed by terrorist groups such as JI and the means available to Indonesia's government agencies to combat the threat will necessitate further examples of information sharing and joint operations of the type that was conducted by Indonesian and Australian police following the Bali bombing. As noted in *D2000*, "Australia's fundamental interests and objectives in having a good defense relationship with Indonesia remain as important as ever. The government is committed to working with the Indonesian government to establish over time a new defense relationship that will serve our enduring shared strategic interests" (2000, 15). Force structure implications for future combatant and noncombatant operations suggest that any Australian force must be capable of operating successfully in the littoral along Indonesia's coasts against an unconventional insurgent threat.

Effective diplomatic and defense liaison with the various levels of Indonesian government and military is also essential if a greater understanding is to be reached between Australia and Indonesia. As the *Defense Update 2003* reaffirms, "The Australian Government attaches great importance to supporting the Indonesian government and its people as it manages its many challenges. Indonesia's territorial integrity remains in Australia's national interests" (Hill 2003, 19).

Philippines

The Philippines are located north of Indonesia adjacent to the South China Sea and are home to over 85 million people. The predominant religion is Roman Catholic. It is a country that has strong historical ties with both Spain and the United States. The groups of islands that make up the Philippines are over three hundred thousand square kilometers, almost 67 percent of which is covered by forest and jungle. The islands also have thirty-seven thousand kilometers of coastline (see figure 5).



Figure 5. The Philippines

Source: Asia Source, New Guinea Map [Website]; available from <http://www.asiasource.org/profiles/ap-mp-03>; Internet; accessed on 9 February 2004.

Within the Philippines, the major city of Manila, located at the peak of the triangle that encompasses, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and PNG, has expanded significantly since 1900. Due to its location on rising ground adjacent to the harbor of Manila Bay, and surrounded on two sides by lakes and delta river systems, it has significant infrastructure problems. The population of over 11,000,000 is expanding at a rate of over two percent a year and is predicted to be 14.8 million by 2015. While Manila is one of the richest cities within SE Asia it does have significant problems with its water supply and connection to a reliable sewerage system and power supply. It is the sustainability of a reliable water supply that threatens the continued health of the city.

Manila, like its larger regional neighbor, Jakarta, is not attracting the level of government funding necessary to sustain its current expansion. Increased urbanization has spawned the growth of extensive settlements that lack even basic amenities. Jakarta and Manila attract large numbers of the rural population drawn by the lure of employment and a better life, only to discover that employment is difficult to find and the cost of living expensive. These people are then forced to live in makeshift shantytowns on the city's fringes. It is in these sprawling shantytowns that separatist organizations are able to recruit willing participants, disaffected by the imbalance of wealth and inequality, to take the battle to the government forces.

The security situation within the Philippines is as difficult as the situation within Indonesia. As William Tow notes in *Asia-Pacific Strategic Relations, Seeking Convergent Security*, "Many contemporary assessments of the Philippines' national security start with the fundamental assumption that addressing external threats is less central to maintaining its security than are the tasks of resolving internal socio-political

conflicts and completing a tenuous process of nation building” (2001, 143). Like Indonesia, Philippine society is dominated by a political and military structure that does not favor absolute democracy. Rather, the populace is not fully involved in the democratic process. As Tow further notes, “Security in the Philippines can only be realized when the ruling oligarchy is supplanted by the institutionalized participation of the country’s populace” (2001, 143).

The government of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has struggled to overcome two other significant factors that have impacted on the Philippines’ ability to deal with the internal security problem. The Asian financial crisis has impacted on military modernization. With the exception of the purchase of two logistical support ships, some trainer jets, and forty armored personnel vehicles, there are no immediate plans to expand to meet any increased internal threats. Chinese initiatives in the South China Sea are the second serious impact. The construction of airstrips on the disputed Spratly Islands, has been called by one government commentator, former Philippines Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado, “a dagger at our underbelly” (Tow 2001, 144). The Philippines have been unable to react in a significant fashion because of serious constraints brought on by the Asian financial crisis and ultimately the strategic imbalance between the Philippines military and the Chinese military. In addition to the Philippines and China, the Spratly's are also claimed by Indonesia, Vietnam, and Malaysia. This area was considered a possible flashpoint for the region as little as five years ago and may prove to be so again within the future. Any conflict is likely to be between a coalition of nations and China.

ASEAN and its “embryonic multilateral venture” (Leifer 1996,53), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), have failed to approach the problem from a cooperative

viewpoint. According to Leifer, the ARF “can be seen as an imperfect diplomatic instrument for achieving regional security goals in that it seeks to address the problem of power which arises from the anarchical nature of international society without provision for either collective defense or conventional collective security” (1996, 53). The lack of a suitable mechanism to enforce the collective decisions of ASEAN and the ARF will continue to undermine the effect of this body within the region if conflict were to reoccur.

The internal security problems of the Philippines represent a real security threat to the region. Philippine militant organizations have links to international terror organizations and, according to Huang and McCulloch, “taken together, what one finds in Southeast Asia is an international terrorist network as well-grounded, well-supported, far-reaching and threatening as *al Qaeda*, but without the option of using U.S. military power to quell the network, as we saw in the anti-Taliban campaign” (2001, 3).

Principal among the terrorist threats within the Philippines are the Abu Sayyaf and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). According to Emily Clark, writing for CDI, the threat of these two groups has transcended the borders of the Philippines and has spilled into the international arena:

Abdurajak Janjalani, an Islamic scholar and mujahedin in the Afghan-Soviet war, founded Abu Sayyaf after he, like the contemporaries that formed his initial recruiting crop, returned from studies in Saudi Arabia and Libya determined to fulfill the Muslim ideal of an Islamic state. The group first mobilized in August 1991, with the bombing of a ship in Zamboanga harbor and a grenade attack on a performance by Christian missionaries. Attacks on Catholic congregations--hand grenades thrown into churches--attacks on ethnic Chinese and abduction of priests, nuns, and teachers in the Catholic community soon followed. Abu Sayyaf's activities were domestic in scope and remained relatively unknown until it blasted out of obscurity with the April 23, 2000, kidnapping at Sipadan.

The MILF is the vanguard of the Islamic movement in the Bangsamoro homeland in Mindanao and the neighboring islands. The MILF was formed in

1977 when Hashim Salamat, supported by ethnic Maguindanaos from Mindanao, split from the Moro National Liberation Front, advocating a more moderate and conciliatory approach toward the government. In January 1987, the MNLF signed an agreement relinquishing its goal of independence for Muslim regions and accepting the government's offer of autonomy. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the next largest faction, refused to accept the accord and initiated a brief offensive that ended in a truce later that month. The Mindanao-based Moro Islamic Liberation Front fields around 2,900 troops. (2002, 2)

Both of these groups are particularly important to the international community, as they are viewed as groups with established links throughout the remainder of the region. As Huang and McCulloch note: “Here one finds scattered but substantial pieces of evidence that several radical Islamic groups, overcoming national and geographical barriers, have maintained deep and long-running ties with one another toward a shared fundamentalist goal” (2001, 1). These established ties include common training and capabilities that go beyond the common terrorist methods of suicide bombings and car bombings. These two groups have developed an offensive capability that can inflict proportionately heavy losses on military formations. Since 1997 the Philippine Army has suffered over 300 casualties. Tactics include kidnapping, conventional attacks, and extensive use of booby traps, demolitions, and snipers.

The commitment of US Special Forces training teams to assist the Philippine authorities to confront the threat of Abu Sayyef and MILF in the Philippines indicates that the US and its coalition partners are committed to stamping out the threat of militant terrorism within SE Asia. Yet, this deployment also indicates that the US expects tough action in return against terrorism if those same SE Asian nations are to receive further military and financial assistance in the future.

Malaysia

Malaysia, like the other representative countries of SE Asia is heavily influenced by other cultures, and in particular by colonialism. A nation sitting at the southern end of the SE Asia landmass, Malaysia has benefited from its position between the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean, and has become the most prosperous of the developing nations. Malaysia's population is approximately 22,000,000, based on the 2001 figures, predominantly on the Malay peninsula. The Malay coastline is over 4,500 kilometers long and is a mixture of the peninsula and the major states of Sabah and Sarawak. Singapore was a part of the Malaysian Federation for eight years in the 1960s; however, it chose to break away and adopt its current island nation status. Malaysia is officially an Islamic country, however, non-Muslims are free to pursue their own religious beliefs and worship as they please.

The government is formed from a process of multiparty elections; however, all prime ministers since independence from the British have also been leaders of the predominant political party, the United Malays National Organization (UMNO). There is a royal family, however, it is the prime minister, who is elected for five years, that is also the leader of the Islamic faith in Malaysia and is the most powerful individual in the country. In a system unique to Malaysia, members of the national council or senate, are appointed by the paramount ruler and by the thirteen states. The general population has no role in the process. Representatives in the lower house or the people's council are all elected by universal adult suffrage. The legal system is also based loosely on the British system. Decisions of the lower level courts; the high courts, are reviewed by the higher level court, the Supreme Court, in a system that is similar to the British common law

system. In deference to the predominant religion, Islam, Syariah law applies nationwide to all Moslems, though all matters of appeal for these courts rest with the ruler of the respective states.

Malaysia's relationship with Australia, Indonesia, and Singapore is marked by outbursts of rhetoric, predominantly from the most visible leader of recent years, the recently retired Dr Mahathir Mohamad. A recent profile of Dr Mahathir in BBC News described his relationship with the West as follows: "While his colourful reputation abroad stemmed from frequent barbed comments about the West and his scant regard for human rights, his authoritarian but essentially pragmatic policies at home won him much popular support and helped transform Malaysia into an Asian economic tiger" (BBC News 2003, 1). Australia's recent relationship with Malaysia has been stormy, partly due to the Mahathir's rhetoric and partly due to a perceived arrogance of Australian political dialogue with SE Asia. Dr Mahathir described this perception during a recent press conference to announce continued dialogue on PNGs acceptance into ASEAN. He notes "his nation had a good relationship with Australia, but too often some politicians tried to tell his country what to do" (2003, 1). If Australia is going to be successful in developing closer diplomatic, trade, informational, and military relationships with Malaysia then acceptance of Malaysia as an influential partner in the region must be forthcoming. Clearly Malaysia has developed significantly in the past forty years and will continue to do so, benefiting from shrewd government investment and economic expansion.

Regional Impacts of Urban Expansion

The principal population expansion in SE Asia and the Pacific over the past forty years has been in the urban littorals. Increasing numbers of the rural population have

migrated to coastal regions, increasing the pressure on already overcrowded urban centers, and infrastructure, under stress because of inadequate funding, has not coped. The funding required to improve the situation has instead been channeled to the military to counter internal security threats such as the Indonesian and Philippine fight against separatist movements. As Russell Glenn notes in his essay “Cleansing Polluted Seas” in Robert Bunker’s *Non State Threats and Future Wars*,

The movement from rural to more densely populated region is nearly universal, but the rates in developing nations exceed those of their more economically fortunate counterparts. Cities and towns are sources of wealth. Migration from the countryside carries the promise of higher wages, and relief from social isolation, especially attractive to the young. The resultant growth often outpaces urban economies’ capabilities to provide housing, utility infrastructure, and human services support. Concentrations of dissatisfied newcomers make it easy to understand why [nonstate actors] are so successful in their pursuits. Disgruntlement born of unmet expectations grows in the soil enriched by observations of the wealthy living in close proximity, by oppression of those new rural arrivals and the collocation of groups harboring long-standing antipathies. (2003, 110)

Separatist groups therefore have a fertile recruiting base upon which to draw in these dense urban developments. The threat posed by these organizations within Indonesia and the Philippines is significant for their neighbors, including Australia. The degree of threat to Australia and the region posed by threat groups in PNG and the Solomon’s is not considered as serious, but is potentially dangerous. A force structure is required that will enable the ADF to interact with the existing government and state agencies that have been established to deal with the terrorist threat, but the force must be able to sustain itself for indefinite periods without having to draw extensively on the underdeveloped capabilities of the host nation. Self-sustainment was difficult to maintain in the recent East Timor deployment, which was conducted within 1,000 miles of

mainland Australia. The government has articulated this need in the Defense Update 2003, noting that a future force must be mobile, flexible, ready, and sustainable.

CHAPTER 3

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE AND ARMY TASKING

In view of the far-reaching potential for change as a result of the release of Defense Update 2003, MOLE and control operations still remain the key concepts for employment of the Army in a joint environment within the region. The relevance of both documents still remains; however, the nature of the threat envisaged when both documents were developed has changed somewhat, as identified in chapter two. The purpose of this chapter is to identify the current capabilities available to the ADF and to analyze those capabilities against the operating environments identified in chapter two and the government's most recent strategic guidance. The criteria to be used for assessment are based on the government guidance included in the recently released *Australia's National Security, A Defense Update 2003* (Defence update 2003): "These new circumstances indicate a need for some rebalancing of capabilities and priorities to take account of the new strategic environment, changes which will ensure a more flexible and mobile force with sufficient levels of readiness and sustainability to achieve outcomes in the national interest" (Hill 2003, 24).

The security situation in the Asia Pacific region presents many challenges for the ADF, specifically the Australian Army. In view of the October 2002 Bali bombing, the growth of separatist movements in Indonesia and the Philippines has created the most significant regional security issue for Australia in recent memory. Perhaps in part due to the rise in prominence of groups such as JI, the Australian government deemed it necessary to release an update on D2000 in February 2003. The government's key

strategic document until February 2003 was D2000, which acknowledged threats both domestically and within the immediate neighborhood. However, the recently released Defense Update 2003 noted a significant change within the region. It recognized less of a need for ADF operations in the Defense of Australia, acknowledging that, more significantly, Australian national security interests could be affected by events outside of Australia's immediate neighborhood, necessitating ADF involvement in coalition operations (Hill 2003, 23). The impact of the release within the region has been mixed, drawing negative comments from Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia. To understand the change in government strategic policy it is necessary to identify the contributing factors.

Impacts of Defense Update 2003

The government rationale for moving ADF operations forward and away from more traditional areas of operations is linked to a change in security and stability in the region. The region refers to the triangle of sovereign states from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, to the Philippines and New Guinea. In the recently released Defense Update 2003 it was noted that: "The changed global strategic environment, and the likelihood that Australian national interests could be affected by events outside of Australia's immediate neighborhood mean that ADF involvement in coalition operations further afield is somewhat more likely than in the recent past" (Hill 2003, 23). The government rationale for redefining the criteria for deploying the ADF either within the region or in the wider global sphere articulated in Defence update 2003 is twofold. Firstly, the government has linked the rise of terror organizations within the region to existing threat organizations within the Middle East and East Asia. While not attempting to justify any future deployment of forces to Iraq, Defense Update 2003 attempted to link a reduced

threat of a direct attack on Australia to increased US strategic dominance within the region (Hill 2003,9).

Secondly, the government identified the threat of WMD available to rogue states within North Asia and the Middle East as directly affecting Australia's interests. There is no doubt that a significant change has occurred within the region and Australia's security has become more problematic as a result. However, there has been immediate impact within Australia and within the region to the release of the document. Within Australia the government's motives have been criticized, as Peter La Franchi notes: "[Defence Update 2003] contrasted with the quality and content of earlier analyses [leaving] Defense Update 2003 vulnerable to criticisms that extensive political involvement in its preparation has resulted in the release of a manifesto geared to the current domestic political concerns of the government, rather than the substantive strategic document it could have been" (2003, 23). La Franchi's criticism may be warranted, however, renewed strategic guidance from government to defense was required to account for the rise of nonstate threats within the region.

The impact of the new strategic guidance within the region was almost immediate, and controversial, particularly after Prime Minister Howard responded to a hypothetical question during a press conference to discuss the policy. Malaysia and Indonesia were particularly vocal in their criticism, due in part, to their interpretation of Mr Howard's comments, believing them to endorse unilateral military responses to threats identified in regional countries. As noted by Dan Murphy writing in the *Christian Science Monitor*, "Howard's comments have created a regional uproar, with Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines all condemning Howard's echo of the emerging

US 'pre-emption' doctrine as a threat to their sovereignty. Yesterday, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammed threatened to break off counter terrorism cooperation with Australia. And Philippines Foreign Secretary Blas Ople said earlier that 'this proposal has no ghost of a chance to be supported in the UN General Assembly'" (Murphy 2003, 1).

Australia is clearly desirous of good working relationships with its regional neighbors, particular in regard to combined operations against terrorism. However, it will not sit by and allow those same regional neighbors to pay lip service to achieving tangible gains against the threat. The right of a particular nation to act preemptively against an identified threat remains a valid weapon of deterrence. Legitimacy for employing preemptive strikes is based upon the fact that nonstate actors are acting independently of any government or country and are therefore outside the confines of international law. This position has been taken by many Western nations apart from Australia, such as the US and the UK in Afghanistan, to justify their actions. While the reaction of Asian nations is understandable, their relative inaction through their formal alliance organizations such as ASEAN and the ARF has forced the hand of nations such as Australia, particularly within the Asia-Pacific region. As Thomas Friedman noted in a recent a recent essay in the *New York Times*, "Hand in Hand with Islam," "We cannot change other societies and cultures on our own. But we cannot just do nothing in the face of this mounting threat. What we can do is partner with the forces of modernization within these societies to help them fight the war of ideas. Because this is a struggle within the Arab-Muslim world, and we have to help our allies there" (January 8, 2004).

Australia is extremely confident of the ability of regional initiatives among ASEAN's member nations to tackle terrorist organizations and their links. However, even

with the success of joint Indonesian-Australian investigations after the Bali bombings, progress has been slow. Australia has proven that it is willing to adopt a unilateral approach and conduct military operations against the will of nations in the region. The need to intervene in East Timor was not a time to be wary of treading on eggshells. Action was required and plainly the Indonesian military proved unable or unwilling to prevent the descent into anarchy that occurred after the vote for independence. ASEAN's policy of nonintervention against the sovereign status of another member nation will continue to make realistic achievements within the Asia Pacific region difficult. A regional security force that is composed of forces from ASEAN's member nations and funded by ASEAN and other interested nations, such as Australia, Japan, Singapore and the US, warrants further investigation.

Defense Update 2003 concluded that, for the foreseeable future, any ADF operations are likely to occur within the context of the following regional contingencies: the war on terror, efforts to counter the proliferation of WMD, or operations to enhance global security and stability. The MOLE concept is validated by the implications for defense as a result of the changes identified in Defense Update 2003. While the prospect of operations against the war on terror farther a field than Australia's immediate region exists, the most likely scenario is the ADF supporting coalition efforts against the war on terror within the immediate neighborhood. As Defense Update 2003 states: "SE Asia and the South Pacific face major challenges due to the political weakness, decline in governance, difficulty in grappling with terrorism and the economic effects of terrorism. If these trends continue, there may be increased calls on the ADF for operations in Australia's immediate neighborhood" (Hill 2003, 23). In view of the government's

determination to act within the region, it is prudent at this stage to discuss the implications for MOLE actions arising from the release of Defense Update 2003.

Defense Update 2003 and Implications for MOLE

MOLE envisages four specific actions to achieve successful operational outcomes. These are shaping operations, entry from air and sea (EAS), decisive operations, and transition operations. This section will analyze these four actions against the four force capabilities identified within Defence Update 2003, namely: flexibility, mobility, readiness, and sustainability. The aim is to assess the regional threat against MOLE's key actions and the strategic and military taskings identified in the Defense Update 2003, to provide generic force capability recommendations for successful operations within the region. Subsequent chapters will develop the generic force recommendations into a force structure to successfully perform MOLE actions in a region characterized by an unconventional threat in countries with expanding urban populations, culturally dominant religions, and inadequate infrastructure.

Defence Update 2003 and Shaping Operations

Shaping operations within MOLE rely on continuous actions to establish the conditions for success. Forces assigned conduct operations that will eventually enhance their ability to generate sufficient shock to dislocate or disrupt the adversary's capacity to react. The primary threat within the region identified in chapter two is an unconventional force employing indiscriminate acts of violence in predominantly urban terrain. Threats emanate from within the ROI, but particularly from terror cells in Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. These threats are representative of a global terror threat with mooted terrorist links to the Middle East and East Asia. Successful shaping operations demand

isolation of that threat. Regionally this is difficult due to the limited knowledge and substantiated proof of the activities of terror organizations such as JI, Abu Sayyef, and MILF.

Shaping operations commence some time prior to the subsequent actions of EAS and direct action (DA) and are defined as those operations that set the conditions for a force to be able to generate shock. As noted in the MOLE concept “Shaping actions occur at all levels from the national strategic to the tactical. Shaping actions are inclusive of actions that reinforce future friendly force action as well as targeting the adversary’s ability to collect and gather information on which to plan a coherent and appropriate response and their ability to fight” (Willis 2003, 6). Therefore, the messages associated with a successful shaping operation are required to be consistent throughout the conduct of a particular operation. Consistency will assist in the achievement of the overall aim of the particular operation and of convincing the intended target of the legitimacy of the message. The generic force structure implications for a successful shaping operation within the region must include a heavy emphasis on economy of force operations, such as military intelligence, psychological operations (PSYOP), and information operations (IO), all of which place particular importance on developing a commander’s situational awareness and conditioning the reaction of threat forces and indigenous populations.

Shaping and Flexibility

Flexibility in this context contends that a force must be suitably balanced in its initial structure to allow commanders to adjust to suit changes in the threat or operational situation. The Army has access to a number of assets within its current structure to adequately perform shaping operations, in addition to those other offensive capabilities

that are part of a joint operation. There are a number of sensors and capabilities available to a commander to provide flexibility. These are as simple as UAVs and light observation helicopters (LOH). Both of these systems have been employed successfully in East Timor by INTERFET and on Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan and OIF in Iraq by Australian forces to complement the efforts of other intelligence sources, such as HUMINT. The key to successful intelligence gathering appears to be the successful layering of assets to achieve satisfaction of priority intelligence requirements and specific intelligence requirements.

One asset may not be as effective in a particular environment as another; therefore, a commander must be flexible in the application of those assets rather than rigidly insisting on the same asset in each environment. As Brigadier Vince Williams, Commander Headquarters Sectorwest noted after his involvement in UNMISSET: “HUMINT was absolutely important, but I would not put all my eggs in one HUMINT basket. [The] LOHs were great. I have significant concern we are taking the LOH s out of the inventory and replacing them with an armed system that will not be providing the same capability” (2003, 35). It is a significant issue for force structure in the ADF for operations within the region if the LOHs are not replaced with an equally capable platform. Due to the nature of the terrain, which is predominantly rural but tending more towards urbanized, the ability of the Army to gather intelligence to support shaping and the subsequent phases of MOLE could be impacted upon. Recent operational reports from stability operations in Iraq have indicated the superiority of the Kiowa OH58D over the performance of the Apache AH64 when employed in areas of complex terrain.

Observations from the US Army Joint Readiness Training Center noted: “During stability and support operations the UAV becomes less capable. Small enemy forces over large geographic areas degrade the systems ability to cover numerous NAI. . . . Collection managers seem to be overwhelmed keeping up with these tasks and getting the UAV at the right place at the right time to support maneuver commanders. . . . By the time the system leaves the departure airfield to the target, the event will most likely be over” (JRTC 2003, 3).

This is not to say that strategic UAVs do not have their place; in fact for some government level force commitment decisions they may be absolutely vital. However, with respect to the operations in which the Australian Army is likely to be involved, and given the identified difficulty associated with operating UAVs, low-level models with medium-term endurance and the ability to operate line of sight have real application for operations in the region. UAVs are also a suitable source of information when employed well forward for the provision of short-term information to the force that deploys them. Force capabilities to enhance a commander’s ability to counter the threat within the region and provide successful and flexible shaping operations therefore include military intelligence assets, IO and surveillance sensors, and assets that allow economy of force operations, such as Special Forces.

Shaping and Mobility

The second action described in Defence Update 2003 is mobility. Its application during shaping operations as part of MOLE is to assist in setting conditions for success. The ability of a force operating in the region to be successful stems, in part, from its ability to generate effects such as fixing. If the intelligence assets of the force are

coordinated and achieve a layered effect, the information available to a commander will dictate his next actions with regard to his fixing forces. For the Army to successfully perform shaping operations it must contain an element that provides enhanced tactical mobility and the necessary firepower to fix a threat force. A tactical mobility platform should also seek to achieve protection and survivability to provide the ground commander the ability to conduct subsequent operations and continue to set the conditions for the decisive operation. As CA Lieutenant General Leahy noted in a recent speech to the United Services Institute in Canberra: “A direct fire protected mobility platform represents an important building block of both the combined arms team and a hardened networked Army” (2003, 17).

Shaping and operational mobility may require additional lift assets that are capable of operating on dispersed landing fields to support forward troops such as Special Forces. The aircraft can be coordinated into a target area by a combination of ground forces and AWACS and contribute to the supported commander’s shaping options. Strategic mobility allows deployment of larger forces for protracted deployments within the region and may include assets capable of projecting larger than the usual high readiness company-sized groups. Force capabilities to enhance tactical, operational, and strategic mobility when conducting shaping operations within the region require further coordination with current and projected programs to ensure that government guidance is being met.

Shaping and Readiness

The size of the ADF has led the government to consider niche capabilities the solution to force structure when committing troops to coalition or UN operations. Recent

commitments of troops to OEF and OIF are examples, with the force limited to Special Forces, Naval assets, a squadron of Air Force fighters, support elements, and headquarters elements.

However, to be effectively prepared for operations to provide security in the immediate neighborhood and support wider interests (key tasks from D2000) suggests that two brigade-sized forces, the first based on a light airmobile brigade capable of conducting airmobile operations from amphibious platforms, and the second a medium-weight force with integrated offensive fire support, also amphibious capable, are a basic requirement. The guidance from government in Defence Update 2003 describes the need for high readiness in deployable forces. By continually reverting to niche contributions the government is contributing to the overall ineffectiveness of the ADF in two ways. Firstly it is denuding the combined capability of the larger organization, such as regular infantry brigades for the benefit of a highly capable but considerably smaller organization such as Special Forces. Secondly, the over commitment of capabilities such as Special Forces, refueling aircraft, and naval platforms risks burn out. To effectively shape the battlefield, the force available must be structured to be ready for short notice deployments as a formation that is supplemented by additional specializations that enhance the overall capability of the force and deal with the regional threat.

Entry from Air and Sea (EAS) and Flexibility

MOLE envisages a phased entry of forces for effective operations within the region. Entry is a complex phase that will require considerable coordination to be successful. The actions of Defence Update 2003 remain relevant to the conduct of entry operations and will be covered in turn. Firstly, considering flexibility, this phase requires

forces to be ready for deployment and is characterized by rapid transportation in either strategic air or sea mobility assets. For a contingency that allows greater flexibility in reaction time and preparation, the deployment of a heavier mechanized force by sea may be appropriate. By doing so the commander has greater flexibility when he transitions his force from EAS to DO as the landed force will have greater integral mobility and fire power. In contrast for a contingency that requires a more rapid response with reduced lead times for deployment, a light force deployed by strategic air assets would be appropriate. This requirement has significant implications for the current state of the ADF's strategic lift. The current fleet of C103Js is sufficient to sustain deployed forces of up to a brigade-sized force, though only when supplemented by AN124 aircraft or similar aircraft for troop movement.

EAS and Mobility

The operational mobility of a light initial entry force is characterized by maneuver either by air assault from a limited number of embarked helicopters or by parachute or air-land operations from a forward staging base. This situation has force structure implications, as the Army at present cannot maneuver sufficient forces to an area of operations to conduct concurrent entry operations and decisive actions as envisaged by MOLE doctrine. The rounding out of the 1st Brigade, currently located in Darwin, to include an additional mechanized battalion will provide the Army with a balanced and capable force for shaping and entry operations. The provision of modern tanks will enhance the forces' ability to conduct entry operations and subsequent decisive actions. Mobility for either light or heavy forces by strategic amphibious lift assets is currently limited to only a battalion group sized force at present. Clearly this does not provide the

government or the joint force commander a significant amount of flexibility when planning force options. To allow the Army to contribute a significant force to counter the type of threat envisaged within the ROI, a significant enhancement of the amphibious capability must be pursued.

EAS and Readiness

The impact of increased threat within the region has forced the government to reconsider the degree of ADF amphibious deficiencies, and it is prepared to upgrade the current amphibious capability to meet the requirements of MOLE. As previously discussed, increased readiness of a larger proportion of the Army is suggested as a viable alternative for the government and meets its guidance outlined in Defence Update 2003. Rather than continuing to offer niche forces for commitments, the ability to draw larger building blocks of capabilities from extant organizations that are trained and compatible makes as much sense. Current government guidance is that the replacement for HMA Ship Kanimbla, a former US Navy Landing Ship Tank (LST), and HMA Ship Tobruk will be larger amphibious vessels in the order of 26,000 tons. The replacement vessel for HMA Ship Manoora, also a former US Navy LST, will be a larger capacity sealift ship. The first new amphibious vessel to come on-line will be the replacement for HMA Ship Tobruk some time after 2010.

As the Australian Strategic Policy Institute document *The Defense Capability Review 2003: A Modest and Incomplete Review* notes: “There are advantages and disadvantages with purchasing larger ships. A smaller number of larger more capable ships have the advantage of requiring fewer assets to be protected by escort vessels. Larger ships can transit more comfortably in higher sea states, have a longer range and

can operate a larger number of helicopters, but they can also provide only the same number of docking spaces as smaller ships. This means that a larger number of smaller ships would have more amphibious lift than a smaller number of larger ships” (Borgu 2003, 9).

EAS and Sustainability

While the decision to purchase newer, more capable amphibious vessels for the ADF is a significant enhancement of the Army’s ability to perform MOLE, the decision suggests changes in strategic direction. The government’s recent decision to consider changes to the Defense Capability Review (DCR), which was originally linked to D2000, supports the suggestion. Whatever the reason, the government is now committed to replacing all three amphibious vessels and support ships. A possible solution for consideration is the purchase of fourth generation roll-on roll-off (4G RoRo) ships to replace the current three amphibious ships. These ships, built in South Korea by Wallenius-Wilhelmsen Lines, are “designed to be generalist ships, able to move 5.500 cars, 1600 containers, locomotives, heavy machinery, whole aircraft . . . upgraded, each 4G Ro Ro can simultaneously act as an AOR (confirm acronym), transport a full light brigade, it stores, vehicles, personnel and fuel as well as 24-36 helicopters” (Asia Pacific Defence Reporter, September 2003, 7). In effect, the purchase of one of these ships would meet the government’s requirements of readiness and sustainability for entry operations, as they are capable of carrying sufficient stores, equipment, and fuel to sustain a brigade for eighty days. The cost of this option will make it attractive to government.

The key tasks for the ADF listed in D2000 were the defense of Australia and operations in the immediate neighborhood. Aldo Borgu suggests that “the government is moving towards placing the defense of Australia and regional requirements as equal priorities with respect to force structure decisions” (2003, 3). That may be the case; however, the fact remains, if the Army is to conduct shaping or entry operations concurrent with decisive actions within the region then the force structure requires enhancement.

Decisive Actions and Flexibility

The Army’s ability to effectively execute Decisive Actions (DA) in MOLE with a flexible force as capable as discussed in Defense Update 2003 is dependent on the force structure. The force must be capable of operating across the spectrum of combat with a mix of forces to meet the most anticipated contingencies. The enhancement of amphibious capability is significant; however, DA is likely to be conducted concurrently or at times consecutively with other shaping and entry operations. As noted in the MOLE concept thesis, “Decisive actions reinforce EAS by maintaining the tempo of operations. Successful entry does not necessarily preclude the need for subsequent tactical actions to further generate shock. Consequently DA forces will need to be rapidly deployable by air and amphibious means in order to maintain tempo, prevent the loss of initiative and overwhelm the adversary’s ability to adapt” (Willis 2002, 7). Effective solutions for troop and equipment carriage are available as previously discussed; however, the capability afforded by improved intelligence and information-gathering capabilities will significantly enhance the flexibility the ground commander has in deciding on a course of action.

Rapid deployment by air, within the region is currently achievable by the ADF. However, in terms of timely responses the ADF is severely limited if a conventional parachute response is required. Currently the ADF has three units capable of conducting parachute operations: the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR), Fourth Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, Commando, (4 RAR Cdo), and Third Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR). The first two units are Special Forces units while 3 RAR, a Third Brigade unit, is the sole conventional force capable of such a response. Third Brigade will generally deploy by amphibious means, given its experience in airmobile operations, directly from those platforms to EAS or DA tasks. To reduce the parachute capability to two Special Forces units would seriously erode the government's strategic flexibility to react conventional forces to short-notice contingencies, especially if those Special Forces units are operational elsewhere.

Decisive Action and Mobility

DA in the region that is dominated by large island populations with significant coastlines and extensive urban centers will require an extremely mobile and rapidly deployable force. To consider the implications of mobility when conducting DA the thesis will discuss mobility from a strategic, operational and tactical perspective. A force capable of strategic mobility is limited, within the ADF, to the F111. The aircraft, though aging, are still an effective and capable platform that could operate and strike land targets within the ROI and directly support land forces. The range of munitions available to the F111 and its payload make it a vital element in successfully prosecuting DA. Any decision that removes the F111 from active duty without identifying a suitable alternative effectively removes the capacity to provide a platform capable of strategic strike and DA.

Strategic mobility may be provided by additional sealift, however, amphibious shipping is not capable of DA. It is the embarked forces that conduct DA, though the naval assets may provide a shaping effect in the form of naval gunfire support. Operational mobility is capable of being provided by amphibious shipping for the forces embarked to perform DA. A mobile and agile aircraft capable of operating over the shore to distant objectives and medium weight armored variants offering protected mobility and effects-based firepower will enhance the Army's ability to conduct DA.

The current structure of the Army necessitates well crafted planning that effectively husbands resources such as Army aviation and mechanized vehicles. DA is a method of operation with emphasis on maintaining tempo and striking at an adversary's vulnerabilities and ultimately destroying the center of gravity. DA may be conducted concurrently with other shaping or entry operations. However, if force structure remains at current levels, then conducting the actions of MOLE consecutively will allow a greater chance of success. Russell Glenn, discussing the implications of decisive operations, notes: "[The] orchestration of joint capabilities is another way that the ADF can free Army forces for commitments to urban interiors" (2003, 55).

Successful EAS operations from strategic platforms of either an amphibious or air nature will set the conditions for DA within the region. While a mature amphibious capability is likely within the next ten years, as previously discussed, current contingencies are barely supportable with the existing three amphibious ships. Air insertions for DA tasks are more problematic, if the government envisages deployments to operational theaters more distant than the region. The planned purchase of air-to-air refueling aircraft will give the ADF the ability to refuel its strategic air assets (currently

C130J aircraft) in flight. It follows that, for contingencies requiring a quicker response than by sea, a light force option with limited tactical mobility is the most likely force. Enhancing the tactical mobility of light forces should therefore be a key consideration for the Army's force development organizations.

Tactical mobility is currently provided by M113 armored personnel carriers, closely supported by tanks. The inclusion of an armored variant that is significantly more capable than the current tank, the Leopard 1, was identified as necessary to provide an Army medium weight brigade with the ability to operate more successfully in the complex terrain of the ROI. Operations in support of coalition partners in the wider region are more likely for the medium weight force with the inclusion of a tank such as the M1 Abrams. However, the remaining armored variants of the Army, such as those that provide tactical mobility to dismounted infantry, must also be capable of withstanding engagement by a variety of shoulder fired rocket propelled grenades. If such a level of protection is not achieved then those additional armored vehicles will continue to be titled armored personnel carriers rather than true infantry-fighting vehicles. Current operations in Iraq have shown that the US Army's Stryker vehicles (very similar to LAV's) are particularly vulnerable to mass-produced RPG-7 shoulder fired rocket launchers. The latest variants are two stage rockets designed to penetrate up to 2 inches of reactive armor and explode inside the crew compartment. Even the M1 Abrams and M2 Bradley fighting vehicles are vulnerable to these weapons from the rear.

Decisive Action and High Readiness Forces

The readiness implications for the Army to perform DA tasks are significant if the government also expects Army forces to perform concurrent EAS tasks. The Army would

benefit from an additional mechanized infantry battalion allocated to the medium-weight 1st Brigade to allow concurrent EAS and DA tasks. Brigades of medium and light design maintained at high readiness with capabilities sufficient to conduct DA within the region could conceivably fulfill the Australian government's future commitments to operations within the region or in the wider region, including coalition operations. However without an increase of at least one infantry battalion or re-rolling of a current battalion to guarantee six, the ability to perform concurrent EAS and DA tasks would be difficult to sustain.

A recent Australian Strategic Policy Institute document, *Pay Your Money and Take Your Pick: Defence Spending Choices for Australia*, outlined five options for defense. Two options looked at the implications for capability by spending more than programmed, two looked at spending less than programmed, and one looked at the current published plan. Option four was titled stepping up, and aimed to address weaknesses in option three (the current budgeted plan) by "outlining an expanded force that would deepen Australia's current range of capabilities significantly" (Thomson 2003, 35). In essence it advocated an increase in the ability to deploy and sustain land forces by adding a program to harden and expand the Army.

The increases included additional air and maritime capabilities and additional command, communications, and intelligence capabilities for the ADF. The utility of this document is that it contributes to the debate on future defense capabilities and costs of any increases of forces and capital equipment. For the Army to conduct MOLE within the region or contribute to a coalition operation in the future, additional forces and capabilities are required. As Dr Thompson notes, "For a relatively moderate increase in

spending, substantial increases in capability, and significant additional strategic options for government [are possible.] The expanded and hardened Army would give [Australia] additional land options, but with the added advantage of being able to more confidently deploy and protect those land forces with air and naval capability” (Thomson 2003, 36). A possible consideration maybe to include a role for the Army Reserve within the force structure. Re-rolling the Army Reserve to defending key elements and headquarters when deployed, reduces to some degree, the requirement of higher readiness forces to perform such tasks.

Transition Actions

The decision of how to structure a force to conduct operations in the region, given the changed strategic circumstances in which Australia now finds itself, is a particularly difficult one. The costs associated with providing defense capability are significant; however, the government has shown that by reviewing the current Defense Capability Plan (DCP) it is willing to consider more expensive options. As this chapter has argued, the force structure to support the government’s strategic intentions within the region requires forces capable of performing shaping and entry operations and decisive actions. The force, however, must also be capable of conducting transition actions to establish the conditions for handover of responsibility either to a peacekeeping force or host nation. In effect the force is responsible for actions across the spectrum of operations and may be deployed for a significant period of time.

Plainly the force structure that results has to be capable of performing all of the MOLE actions in a joint environment in the region or the wider region as either the lead nation or as part of a coalition. Transition actions are generally stability and peace

support operations; however, the force must be as capable of performing DA as it is of performing transition operations. Forces most likely to augment DA forces when the transition actions occur are military police, engineers, civilian police, military intelligence, and civil affairs personnel.

The purpose of this chapter was to identify the implications of Defence Update 2003 on the Army and its ability to fully perform the MOLE actions, and to consider the impact of the threat identified in chapter two. The Army is in the midst of a transition as improved technology is slowly introduced into service and formations benefit from increased levels of operational service. As Defence Update 2003 notes, contributions to coalition operations are more likely in the future, though the structure of those force contributions remains difficult to assess. Chapter four will assess the key determinants of force structure identified in the thesis: MOLE requirements, regional requirements, supporting wider interest requirements, and threat mitigation requirements.

CHAPTER 4

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM REGIONAL ANALYSIS

The ongoing migration of the world population to cities on or near the coasts, combined with growing reach of modern weapons, makes the objective area for decisive military operations more accessible to naval expeditionary forces, which places even greater demands on carrier battle groups and amphibious ready groups. (2002, 407)

George V. Galdorisi, Expeditionary and amphibious warfare. In *Globalization and maritime power*.

An inference from the release of *Defence Update 2003* and a return to a “Forward Defence” policy is that the government has abandoned the policy of the “Defence of Australia,” which was the cornerstone of the 1986 *Review of Australia’s Defense Capabilities*. The government’s clarification that increased strategic presence of the US within the region of SE Asia makes the likelihood of direct attack on Australia unlikely is noted; however, this can only be counted on if the interests of the US within the region remain convergent with Australia’s.

To transition the ADF from a force geared towards the ‘Defence of Australia,’ “with all the logistics luxuries that local support infrastructures offer” (Bostock 2003, 28), to a force that is capable of projecting itself thousands of miles away and sustaining itself for long periods of time is going to be difficult. Bostock suggests, contrary to the view of many, that the decision to shift the operational focus of the ADF from ‘Defence of Australia’ to a more expeditionary focus was caused by the events of September 11 and Bali. He believes that “Careful observers of Australia’s defense and security outlook have known that the writing of change has been on the wall for some time; that the transformation of Australia’s defense stance commenced several years ago, and is

gathering momentum” (2003, 28). If this is the case then those careful observers did not include the government, given the emphasis that defense of Australia received in D2000.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish the parameters for the development of a suitable force structure to perform the key actions of the MOLE concept. After a short introduction the chapter will analyze four specific elements of the region and conflict spectrum to arrive at a recommended force structure: coalition amphibious force structure lessons, regional indicators, the wider area of interest indicators, and, finally, regional and global threat indicators. Examining these four intrinsic components in detail will reveal limitations in the current structure, and the recommendations that follow will form the basis of chapter five.

MOLE and Capital Equipment Requirements

The thesis has already discussed in some detail the specific actions of the MOLE concept and identified possible force structure considerations based on the region. While Australia has recently successfully conducted a number of amphibious operations to support operations in East Timor and the Solomon's, neither of these operations involved sustained effort the type of which is envisaged by MOLE. It is therefore pertinent to review the operational techniques, equipment, and structures of likely partners in the region and the wider region to seek relevant force structure recommendations for the ADF. The nations and forces to be considered are UK, France, and the US.

Recommendations based on analysis of those forces will provide guidance towards the most suitable force structure for the Army to perform littoral power projection in a joint environment in Australia's region of interest (ROI). As Michael Evans noted in his recent monograph, *Developing Australia's Maritime Concept of*

Strategy: Lessons from the Ambon Disaster of 1942: “In addition to harmonizing littoral maneuver and amphibious concepts and capabilities, the ADF needs to come to grips with the broader role of naval operations in the 21st century. While sea control remains an essential feature of maritime operations (as demonstrated by the ADF’s recent experience in East Timor), its purpose has undergone considerable change since the end of the Cold War. Western navies are in the midst of a transition from oceanic to littoral warfare where the emphasis will be on joint power projection from the sea to the land” (2000, 77).

The scope of this chapter does not support detailed recommendations on the capital equipment investments required by the government to allow the ADF to successfully prosecute MOLE. It is not clear what sort of capabilities the ships will have. Studying Western forces with like strategic and operational goals, however, may provide some clearer guidance on the type of ships that are available and the types of forces that can operate from them in the littorals of Australia’s ROI.

US Navy and US Marines Corps

The lessons the ADF can take from the recent experience of the US Navy and US Marines Corps (USMC), in the context of developing like capabilities in MOLE, must be preceded by an understanding of the current capabilities and USMC doctrine. As Bostock notes: “Some of Australia’s more outspoken defense analysts suggest that the ADF of 2010-15 need to resemble the US Marine Corps (USMC), although on a smaller scale; but of size and potency nonetheless that enables a joint amphibious taskforce to project significant power ashore in undertaking, then supporting, land operations” (2003, 28).

While not advocating that the Australian Army abandon its primary role of fighting and winning its nation's land battles to accept the role of a regional sheriff, some analysis of the concept of expeditionary warfare is prudent. The USMC is a unique organization in that it is able to draw on a variety of capabilities that are indigenous to their organization when a contingency requires it. As the USMC doctrinal publication (MCDP) 3, *Expeditionary Operations*, notes: "An expedition is a military operation conducted by an armed force to accomplish a specific objective in a foreign country" (Krulak 1998, 31). The USMC is structured to be capable of rapidly responding to a crisis throughout the world either from a forward base or from afloat in purpose-designed amphibious assets. The capability of the ADF is very similar to this USMC description, though Australia's ability to project strategically is questionable. The USMC advocates structuring a force to be capable of forcible entry at all times, but prefers to use other operational techniques that do not require the seizing and holding of a beachhead, for example, ship to objective maneuver (STOM).

USMC doctrine refers to enabling actions, which are very similar to the ADF's shaping actions. "Enabling actions are those preparatory actions taken by the expeditionary force to facilitate the eventual accomplishment of the mission" (Krulak 1998, 41). The USMC does not differentiate between enabling actions and entry operations, preferring to combine both actions. This reflects more the capability of the USMC to conduct concurrent operations that are all enabling actions. The ADF would be better served retaining the current MOLE doctrine of shaping actions and EAS due to the size of the ADF relative to a USMC unit.

The USMC maintains up to four different forces of varying size that are tailored to a specific contingency. It typically deploys and employs combined arms teams known as Marine air-ground task forces (MAGTFs). All MAGTFs share four basic elements: a command element, a ground combat element, an aviation combat element, and a combat service support element. The structure of a MAGTF is relevant to the ADF, as future contingencies involving the ADF within the region could require a similar structure. The air component of any joint task force (JTF) that the ADF establishes (less any embarked helicopters), would only be able to operate within the endurance range of the aircraft in relation to the Australian mainland until a forward airfield was established. MAGTFs have the ability to serve as a JTF headquarters or as a component headquarters of a JTF.

The second USMC force is a Marine expeditionary unit (MEU). The MEU operates forward deployed from the sea, and according to the USMC Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare concept, “ the MEU is unconstrained by regional infrastructure requirements or restrictions imposed by other nations. Because of its forward presence, situational awareness, rapid response, planning capability, and organic sustainment, the MEU will continue to be the JFCs immediately employable combined arms force of choice” (Jones 2001, 5). The MEU is also special operations capable. The internal structure of the MEU includes infantry, combat support, combat service support, aviation, armor, reconnaissance, and field artillery elements. It can be termed a big battalion or a small brigade (see figure 6).

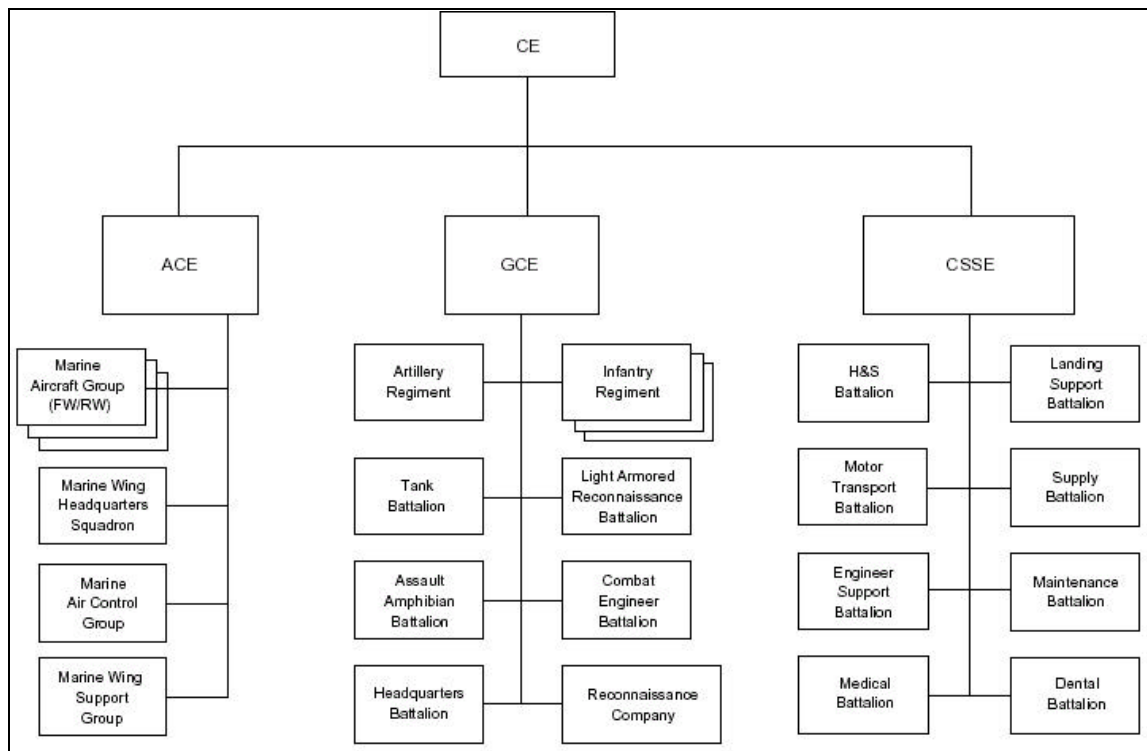


Figure 6. MEU(SOC) Wiring Diagram

Source: Marine Corps Publication MCRP 5-12D [Website]; available from; <http://www.usmc.mil/marinelink/ind.nsf/publications/> Internet; accessed on 27 March 2004.

The Marine expeditionary brigade (MEB) is larger still and is optimized to respond to a full range of crises. It can be deployed strategically by air or by sea and provides the JTF a “robust sea-based forcible entry capability” (Jones 2001, 5). The role of the MEB, and its complimentary capabilities from other services is to locate and counter the adversary’s access denial system. The MEB is then designed to close on critical objectives to achieve decisive results by air, land, or sea. The real lesson for the ADF from the employment of the MEB is the imbedded capabilities that the force contains, rather than the size. At a numerical size of 15,000, the MEB is well beyond the

force projection capability of the ADF. Each branch is represented in the force; however, unlike the ADF, all of these capabilities are also Marines capabilities. This thesis is not advocating the establishment of a separate Army fixed wing capability or naval field artillery units; rather the success of the MEU, MAGTF, and MEB in achieving their missions suggests that a force that is tailored for operations is a possible answer for MOLE. (The Marine expeditionary force (MEF) is the largest of the USMC formations and given its capabilities and size it is not relevant to discuss it any further in this thesis.)

The USMC is currently serviced by three classes of amphibious ships: the San Antonio class amphibious transport dock (LPD), the Wasp class amphibious assault ship (LHD), and the Tawara class (LHA). Each of these ships has capabilities that enhance the ability of the embarked forces to conduct STOM. The Wasp class ships are capable of accommodating the AV-8B Harrier jump jet and the LCAC hovercraft, along with the full range of Navy and Marine helicopters, conventional landing craft, and amphibious assault vehicles. The LHA and the LPD, while not as large as the 40,000-ton LHD, have specific capabilities to move Marines ashore by air and by sea and in their own way are also unique. The amphibious capability of the USMC is second to none in numbers and capability, and when comparing these three classes of ships the ADF should note that the US Navy has designed ships to achieve a wide variety of mission profiles rather than to fit a specific sized force. The ships are capable of embarked mission specific force structures as a result.

United Kingdom

The UK has not shelved its desire to maintain a leading edge blue water navy to act in defense of its interests across the globe. On the contrary it has reinforced this desire by

announcing it plans to build two new aircraft carriers. It is planned that these ships will house air operations for the short take off and vertical landing version of the joint strike fighter.

While the UK has maintained a strong capability with its blue water fleet, it is the developing amphibious capability that is of particular interest to Australia. The UK currently maintains a dedicated amphibious force based on the Royal Marines of 3rd Commando Amphibious Brigade. The principal platform of the force is the HMS Ocean, a helicopter carrier capable of operating medium and heavy lift helicopters and concurrent well deck operations for a variety of armored and amphibious landing craft. Recent noncombatant and show of force operations in Sierra Leone demonstrated the capability of this vessel to operate effectively in the littoral waters off the African coast. The amphibious helicopter carrier was originally conceived in the mid 1980s to provide the sort of amphibious assault capabilities last offered by HM Ships Albion and Bulwark.

The ship's primary role is to carry an embarked military force supported by twelve medium support helicopters, six attack helicopters and four Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel Mk 5 Landing Craft. Her secondary roles include afloat training, performing as a limited anti-submarine warfare platform and a base for antiterrorist operations. The commandos in HMS Ocean are supported by their own assault engineers, gun batteries, logistics personnel, and an assault squadron. When combined with their air group they form a completely self-sustaining unit, which can deploy from beyond the horizon and over one hundred miles inshore. HMS Ocean and her support vessels also carry a vast quantity of field rations and ammunition to keep them supported and over thirty air-transportable vehicles to give them maximum mobility ashore

Two key lessons for the project team developing Australia's new amphibious ships are, firstly, the HMS Ocean is not capable of off loading heavy armored vehicles and, secondly, it does not have a well deck capacity for its indigenous MK V landing craft. It is forced to rely on stern door marriages or along side port and starboard cross loading techniques. In heavier weather this would be an obvious disadvantage. One advantage of the vessel for consideration, however, is its capacity to conduct refueling operations for all UK helicopters. It can conduct helicopter and refueling operations simultaneously.

While the HMS Ocean does have minor design deficiencies it is a very capable platform for operations farther afield than the closer littoral regions of the UK. The hull is based on the same hull upon which the Invincible class aircraft carriers are built, and, therefore, the Ocean is a genuine blue water amphibian. As a recent Janes article noted: "Amphibious forces played a leading part in the operations in Iraq. [HMS] Ark Royal, configured as an amphibious ship, led a group comprising [HMS] Ocean and four landing ships to conduct an attack on the A-Faw peninsula, the first helo-borne landing since Suez in 1956" (Janes Fighting Ships May 2003, 4) A key lesson to consider from the UK experience is in both Sierra Leone and the A-Faw Peninsula is that at least two large amphibious platforms, supported by additional landing ships, were required to generate sufficient combat power quickly on the objective.

The UK has also entered into a twenty-five year agreement with a civilian contractor to be build six Roll on Roll off (RoRo) ships that will be crewed and maintained by the contractor to improve the strategic sealift. Designed with transporting military equipment in mind, the vessels can dock at a wide variety of ports, loading from

either the stern or side. The ships also carry a forty-five-ton crane, have enhanced stability, and have ice-breaking capabilities (DPA 13 June 2003, 1). The ships were delivered twenty months ahead of schedule and ready for service to deploy elements of the UK contribution to OIF.

France

In the past ten years the French have made extensive acquisitions to their naval fleet, particularly in amphibious shipping. The recent purchase of two 21,000-ton multipurpose amphibious ships is the culmination of a trend that saw France “mount no major expeditionary operations between the end of the Algerian War in 1962 and the 1991 conflict in the Gulf” (Thomas 2000, 17). France has been extensively reviewing its military since 1991 to rationalize the three arms and allow the government to generate sufficient force to respond to short-term contingencies. Recent contributions to the NATO effort in Bosnia and Kosovo have gone some way to restoring France’s ability to operate in a coalition environment, but until the review and restructuring is complete there will be difficulties in meeting its defense commitments (Thomas 2000, 20).

The French amphibious vessels will be designed to allow France to participate in coalition operations. According to the French Ministry of Defense, “the aim of the two ships is to serve as pre-positioned command platforms and landing docks for joint and multinational amphibious operations. They will also be capable of conducting non-combatant evacuations and humanitarian relief” (Lewis and Scott 2000, 1). Though as Thomas notes, France did not conduct any significant expeditionary operations for nearly thirty years, it did conduct frequent small-scale interventions along the African coast in that same period. So it is significant that the new ships will have the capability of

supporting not only conventional multinational operations, but also humanitarian operations.

When the request for tender for the planned replacement of the Royal Australian Navy LPAs is released, consideration of load capacity, offload capabilities, and internal load configuration options should be a priority. An amphibious platform dock/helicopter that is capable of operating up to six heavy lift helicopters and the replacement for the landing craft heavy appears to be the best option. Three ships of this capability could conceivably lift an entire brigade group. This is a significant increase in embarked capacity considering that the current three amphibious ships can only lift a battalion group.

Requirements to address the significant lack of sea-based offensive support for the entry force should also be addressed during the tender selection process. The current five-inch gun on the ANZAC class frigates is a mooted solution, though the weapon system performed extremely effectively on recent operations in Iraq, each ship is armed with only one variant. Unless more than one ship is allocated to the force to allow engagement of more than one land based target at the point of entry, the capacity to suppress multiple targets is not possible.

Fitting the amphibious platforms with a missile system capable of attacking land-based targets may assist the entry forces until artillery and mortar systems can be brought into action. A local defensive capability for the amphibious ships should be considered to allow operations closer to the coast and reduce turnaround time for air insertion assets. This close in protection from attacks, such as occurred to the USS Cole, and may also be prudent, given the sophistication of threat forces in the region. The Phalanx Close-in

Weapon-System is a possible solution. Fitting the ships with systems that allow protection from antiship missiles or low flying air attack, such the Raytheon Rolling Airframe Missile (RAM), may reduce the burden on the planned anti air warfare destroyers. Regional implications suggest that these defensive and offensive weapons systems should be capable of precision guidance to reduce the likelihood of unintended civilian casualties.

Outlining Force Structure Determinants

The successful conduct of MOLE by the Army in Australia's ROI requires more than an improved amphibious capability. The provision of more capable amphibious platforms will supply the embarked force with greater flexibility when planning for entry; however, the current force structure of the deployable brigades requires evaluation. The size of the Australian Army and the wide range of tasking will not allow Australia to develop a specialized entry force based on the USMC model. However, force structure models that result in greater offensive capability and a more integrated combined arms force are possible.

The 2002 *3rd Brigade Capability Development Plan* identified that for a 3rd Brigade entry force to be successful it required improved integral light infantry fire support, improved situational awareness, protected mobility at combat team level, accurate and reliable sea-based fire support, and an improved command, control and communications network (Coutts 2002, 27). Possible equipment-focused solutions for the infantry are planned within various Army and ADF procurement projects; however, equipment goes only part of the way to improving the Army's ability to perform the MOLE concept's actions.

Command and Control in MOLE

Command and control (C2) of the force is acknowledged as difficult under existing arrangements, and further consideration of the options available is required to arrive at a suitable recommendation. Under existing arrangements Commander Australian Theatre (COMAST) exercises command of all Australian operations under delegation from the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF). The CDF has subordinated COMAST to be responsible for the planning and conduct of combined and joint campaigns, operations and other activities as directed by the CDF (Treloar 1999, 2). The issue of commanding a force in MOLE is contentious as it is more than likely to be a joint force, and all services would have an opinion on who should command. This thesis recognizes the recent developments the Navy has made with regard to commanding the ADF's amphibious ships. Extensive experience has been gained from consecutive deployments to the Persian Gulf supporting the enforcement of UN sanctions against Iraq and as a command platform for the ADF's contribution to fighting the GWOT. However, to successfully command and control a joint task force in the conduct of MOLE with elements from all three services it is recognized that the recent experience of the deployable joint force headquarters (DJFHQ) is more relevant.

DJFHQ could command an operation aboard a suitable amphibious platform with a maritime component, a land component, and an air component subordinated to it. The environmental commanders would each command their respective forces however, to support simultaneous air and sea entries the land component commander would have additional capabilities under his command to allow more responsive coordination of those forces. Figure 6 indicates a possible C2 model for MOLE. It should be noted that

the overall command of the JTF falls to the commander, DJFHQ. The model of this C2 structure has all components of the entry force commanded by the entry force HQ, whether it be a division or brigade level HQ.

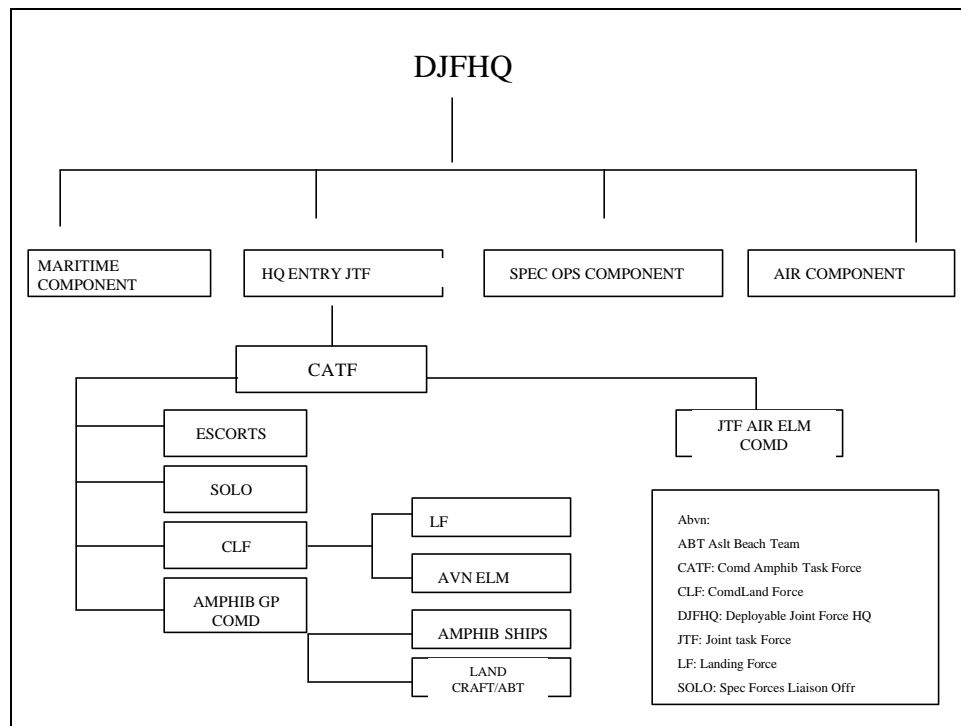


Figure 7. Proposed C2 Arrangements for MOLE

Regional Determinants

The recent experience of the US, UK, and France in the conduct of amphibious operations provides valid lessons for the ADF. The lessons that are of prime concern for this thesis are based on force structure and methods of operations. It is worth noting that all three nations are building amphibious ships of roughly the same type and capacity, and are likely to contribute those ships to coalition operations in the future. Therefore, the

ADF should consider the ramifications of building vessels capable of carrying a combined size of a brigade when committing to coalition operations in the future. The Australian government has directed the DCR to investigate the possible employment of the Wallenius-Wilhelmsen Lines Tamesis class RoRo vessel as a multi-role ship (MRS). The recent UK experiences in OIF and ADF experience in East Timor demonstrated that strategic lift considerations can be met through innovative contracts using commercially available shipping modified for military service.

Earlier analysis in this thesis focused on the key characteristics of the cities within Australia's ROI. That analysis determined that the nations of Indonesia, Philippines, and PNG had, to varying degrees, characteristics that were similar. Drawing on those characteristics contributes to developing an understanding of the type of force structure that may be necessary for the Army to operate successfully within the region. The principal nonmilitary characteristics of the ROI that require specific consideration when tailoring a force structure for operations are issues of culture, government structure, infrastructure, civil programs, and geography.

To lodge a force and operate successfully on another country's sovereign soil requires cultural sensitivity, especially if there is a demonstrated anxiety within the populace to the military's presence. The force can improve its chances of success by including elements such as robust civil affairs elements to work closely with local leaders, both political and religious, with the aim of improving the living conditions and basic amenities of local inhabitants.

Advanced cultural awareness training will assist the landed force in understanding its surroundings and possibly assist in breaking down barriers with the local inhabitants.

This training should focus on religious tolerance, language, history, traditions, and cultural considerations. Representatives of the Australian government should also be included as a part of the force structure. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade personnel working closely with the force commander and local diplomatic officials can enhance the ability of the force to get its message across at the highest levels. Military intelligence personnel, physiological operations and information operations specialists working closely with civilian police from both Australia and the sovereign nation can access and develop quite detailed databases of threat forces and provide a collection focus early in the operation.

Military engineers may initially be required for mobility and survivability tasks to lodge and secure a landed force. However, once the EAS or DA tasks are complete the engineers can refocus their efforts on transition. Public mobility, repairs to vital lines of communications, improved sanitation, and water collection, are tasks most likely within the region. Combat engineers will be suitable for the initial tasks; however, subsequent infrastructure tasks will require support engineers with plant equipment and more specific trade specialists with the capacity to reach back to more detailed engineering expertise.

Indicators from the Wider Region

Direct requests from the United Nations or from other sovereign governments have been assessed under the same criterion, that is, national interest. This trend is likely to continue in the future. Operations further from Australia's shores and similar to the recent commitments in Afghanistan and Iraq remain a distinct possibility in the future as a result. Defending Australia's national interests by contributing to coalitions operations globally remains a likely option for the government. Coalition operations are, by their

very nature, more complex, due in part to the additional planning factors involved. Interoperability in communications and command is an important consideration for the government. The impact of providing specialized organizations, such as Special Forces or field hospitals away from Australia's direct area of strategic influence is another legacy that the government must consider when structuring a force commitment. If Australia is to contribute capable and credible forces to a mid-to-high level contingency in the future then those forces must be based on a highly mobile and robust mechanized force. The force is to be more than a regiment of new tanks, however, it should also include mechanized infantry vehicles, armored cavalry, self-propelled artillery, and requisite combat service support vehicles and equipment.

Other force elements that could enhance this force and provide a viable option for the lead country when considering contributing nations are imagery analysts, military intelligence, electronic warfare, Special Forces, command and control organizations, and combat engineers. A subsequent requirement for military police and civil affairs personnel may also be considered. A key to successful integration of this type of force is the ability to operate within the primary structure of the coalition without having to add significant command and control networks to be effective.

Regional Threat Indicators for Force Structure

A review of the threat outlined in chapter two indicates that a variety of threats exist within Australia's ROI. Threats vary from the PNG problem of tribal warfare to juvenile and young adult males who prey on the relatively affluent international and civilian community. Threats within Indonesia and the Philippines are more significant, as groups such as JI, MILF, and ABF are more indiscriminate in their actions, targeting

moderate Muslim and non-Islamic governments, as well as Western targets, and have proven themselves more than capable of successfully containing the military responses to their actions (Hill 2003, 12). The successful integration of higher-level intelligence provided by the United States into the Philippines military response, however, has effectively forced the MILF back to the negotiating table with the Philippines government. The effectiveness of the intelligence and US Special Forces training teams for the Philippines conventional force intervention against the MILF cannot be underestimated.

Success in the Philippines and Indonesia against the separatist and terrorist movements requires a greater funding effort from the two countries' respective governments, but also from other governments in the region, including Australia. Combined military operations may be some way off at present; however, intelligence sharing and combined police operations may go some way to preventing the wider spread of terror or another Bali style bombing. The links of JI to al Qaeda within Indonesia remains a significant threat to Australia's continued security. The level of the threat demands that the government maintain good working relationships with its counterparts within Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines at a strategic level, as well as continuing to foster the developing relationships between the militaries and police forces at the operational level.

Successful integration of intelligence, Special Forces, civil affairs, and other mission specialists such as engineers are key elements for future shaping operations as a prelude to entry and DA by conventional light infantry forces. The level of threat will dictate what type of force conducts the entry and DA, whether a low-level peace support

mission or a mid-to high-level intensity counterinsurgency operation within the ROI. Regardless, the threat posed by the internationally linked terrorist organizations within Australia's ROI have attracted international interest and response forces acting on excellent real-time intelligence and have proved effective. This method of operation must continue to be endorsed by the regional political and religious leaders if eventual security is to return to the region.

In PNG, however, the threat is relatively unsophisticated, and could be countered by a more effective police force or international police intervention force if so requested by the PNG government. A view of the tactics employed if the situation were to escalate to more than random violence against soft civilian targets could be found in a study of the now disarmed Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). The BRA initially, under the leadership of Francis Ona and, following his ousting, Sam Kuoana, waged a successful campaign against the PNG government and PNGDF. Tactics included systematic destruction of the power generation capacity to the Bougainville copper mine. The company, which is Australian owned, was forced to close down operations after the threat to its personnel became too significant. Ona and Kuoana employed hit and run tactics against the PNGDF, performing some minor demolitions and raid and ambush tactics to effectively forestall the efforts of the Army. The international Peace Monitoring Group, commanded by Australia and New Zealand on rotation, has recently withdrawn from the island after nearly eight years of weapon hand-backs and negotiations.

This analysis has indicated that the successful conduct of MOLE by the Army in Australia's ROI requires more than an improved amphibious capability. The provision of more capable amphibious platforms will supply the embarked force with greater

flexibility when planning for entry; however, the current force structure of the deployable brigades requires enhancement to successfully operate against the identified threat in the ROI and the likely threat in the wider region. Force structure determinants for successful operations in the region included cultural awareness training, knowledge of government services and civil infrastructure, and inclusion of mission specialists such as civil affairs personnel and engineers. Wider regional investigation revealed the utility of personnel such as Special Forces, imagery analysts, military intelligence, civil affairs and military police. Finally, investigation of regional threats indicated that successful integration of civilian police, military intelligence personnel, psychological operations personnel, and Special Forces personnel would significantly enhance the capabilities of the force.

This thesis has concentrated on four themes throughout. Firstly it examined the government's strategic guidance and its impact on the Army and the ADF. Secondly it investigated the threat within neighboring nations in the region, and the contributing factors to the development of those threats. Thirdly, it reviewed the most recent strategic guidance from the government and the relevance and impacts on the Army's key doctrine in the region MOLE. Finally, it investigated four key elements to determine broad indicators of force structure to draw lessons and guide recommendations of force structure and capital equipment within the future ADF. The final chapter will provide a synthesis of the thesis and make conclusions and recommendations of force structure and equipment for the Army to contribute to a successful conduct of the MOLE.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The significant turmoil that resulted from the global terror attacks since 1999, has altered the governments strategic rationale for committing the ADF to operational theaters. The defense of Australia, long the cornerstone of Australian strategic policy, has been discarded due to the governments desire to act in the national interest. Threats posed by nonstate actors within the ROI and by state sponsored terrorism are the principle-identified threats. A direct consequence is the need to develop strategies and concepts for operations within the ROI that effectively combat the threat. The MOLE concept represents the Army's contribution to joint operations within the region and has been the focus of this thesis.

The purpose of this thesis was to analyze the doctrine of MOLE and control operations against a regional threat and to develop recommendations for a future force structure for operations within the ROI. Initially the thesis discussed the key priorities and interests of the Australian government as noted in D2000. Those priorities were: ensure the defense of Australia and its direct approaches, foster the security of its immediate neighborhood, promote stability and cooperation in southeast Asia, support strategic stability in the wider Asia Pacific region, and support global security. However, the release of Defense Update 2003 provided a broader focus for the ADF and identified the requirement to provide forces for operations within the ROI and to be prepared to provide forces for coalition operations in the wider region. The recent deployment to the Solomon Islands has reinforced the Howard government's concerns of the threat that

resonates within the region. However the government is equally concerned and prepared to contribute significant forces to mid-to high-level intensity coalition operations, if requested or required, as evidenced from recent deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq.

This thesis focused on developing recommendations for a force structure to support the MOLE concept within the ROI. In doing so, two geographic areas within the ROI that are of direct interest to Australia were identified, specifically SE Asia and Oceania, each with their own unique problems. With the exception of Singapore, it was observed that the other nations of SE Asia have a series of critical infrastructure deficiencies that mar the urban cities of Jakarta, Manila, and Kuala Lumpur. Problems associated with inadequate power, water supply, sanitation, and sewerage within the cities proper, and especially to the shantytowns on the urban fringes, continue to draw heavily on reduced government funding. Conflicting priorities of whether firstly, to fund solutions for the urban infrastructure problems or to confront insurgent and separatist movements, challenge the governments of Indonesia, Philippines and to a lesser extent Malaysia.

The region of Oceania and the South Pacific has its own unique problems, stemming primarily from economic deficiencies. Poor standards of living and inadequate government support are common in the countries of PNG, the Solomon Islands, and to a lesser extent Fiji, which relies on an effective tourist trade for economic prosperity. Ultimately, if Australia wishes to limit regional conflicts that have the potential to lead to failed states, such as in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands, then diplomatic arrangements that actively engage these governments and allow them a voice in the development of the region, such as the South Pacific Forum, are vital.

Force Structure Conclusions

As Chapter 2 identifies, threat groups, such as MILF, Abu Sayyef, and JI, feed on the discontent of the urban poor, recruiting willing accomplices to perform acts of terror throughout the region. This further undermines the efforts of regional governments to prevent that discontent. Infrastructure problems and the regional threat will severely limit Australia's ability to successfully operate in this region if the force structure is insufficient. A force structure based on a brigade size unit of action with robust capabilities that enable liaison with government agencies and civil infrastructure organizations is vital. In addition to extant brigade units such as infantry, cavalry, artillery, service support and communications additional capabilities including specialist engineer elements, civil affairs liaison teams, military police, military intelligence teams, civil police organizations, and DFAT specialists are required. Effective liaison will enable a smooth passage to transition operations at the completion of shaping and DA. It is recommended that a senior level DFAT advisor be made available to the JTF commander as a standard augmentation for operational deployments in the ROI to enable smoother interaction with existing regional agencies.

A force that conducts operations within the ROI must be self-sustaining for indefinite periods without having to draw extensively on the underdeveloped capabilities of the host nation. The limited support that will be available to the force cannot be relied on during the planning phase and should therefore be discounted until suitable contracts with specialist organizations can be arranged. Contractual arrangements are unlikely until well into the transition phase. A point to note for sustainment planners for operations in the ROI is the recent experience from the East Timor operational deployment; self-

sustainment was difficult to maintain even when conducted within 1,000 miles of mainland Australia.

To be effectively prepared to provide security in the immediate neighborhood and support wider interest (key tasks from D2000 and reinforced within Defence Update 2003) it is suggested that a force structure consisting of two brigade-sized forces, the first based on a light airmobile brigade capable of conducting airmobile operations from amphibious platforms, and the second a medium-weight armored force with integrated offensive fire support, also amphibious capable, is a basic requirement. These two formations already exist within the current force and are trained to operate independently on specific tasks. The operational tempo of the Army has prevented combined training of these two forces above battalion level in recent years. However, to maintain a high level of readiness to effectively conduct shaping operations in the region in the future, combined training must be increased. Thus allowing the organizations to achieve a higher state of interoperability and to complement and supplement one another. This permits a more efficient use of the overall capability, higher readiness and greater flexibility in tailoring responses to specific contingencies. It also permits transition between the various actions of MOLE.

If the Army is to be capable of conducting concurrent shaping and EAS actions then both brigades are going to be required. Training for specific operations is difficult in the current operational environment, given the variety of tasks for which the Army is required to train. However, the maintenance of two brigades trained and sustained for short notice deployments by air and sea is achievable and would continue to meet the government's guidance in D2000, and reinforced in Defence Update 2003, to have a

brigade-sized force ready for deployment with an additional battalion group on operations simultaneously.

Recommendations

Force Structure Recommendations

The government has identified that involvement in coalition operations is somewhat more likely to occur than in the recent past and considers that contributing important niche capabilities is the most likely form of commitment from Australia (Hill 2003, 23). Interestingly, Defence Update 2003 does not clearly separate operations in the ROI and support of coalition operations and appears to advocate niche commitments to both types of operations. Rather than endorsing the niche capability concept for contingencies in the ROI, this thesis suggests that the Army should focus on developing two units of action, based on brigades of light and medium weight for operations within the ROI.

The proposed force structure is in contrast to the commitment of individual niche (specialist) capabilities as the government desires for coalition operations. The brigades, based on the Townsville-based 3rd Brigade, and the Darwin-based 1st Brigade, are offered as a building block, allowing tailoring with additional specialist capabilities to enhance the already existing organization. The recommended attachments include capabilities such as Special Forces, intelligence, specialist civil affairs personnel, linguists who speak both the traditional languages of the region as well as the colonial languages imposed on the region by former European colonial powers, and command and control assets that will improve the brigade's capacity to perform MOLE and operate in

the ROI. Figures 9 and 10 provide a recommended force structure to meet the requirements of MOLE within the ROI for both a light and medium weight force.

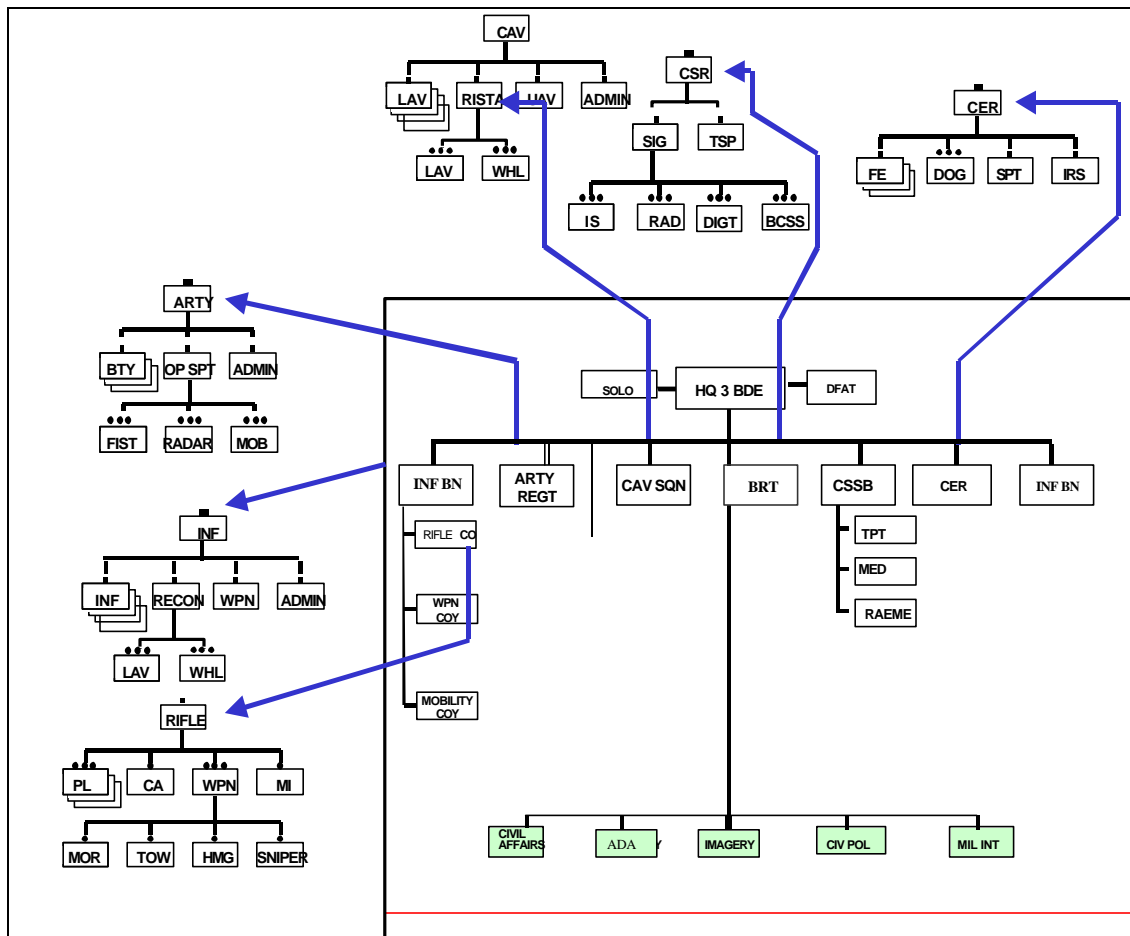


Figure 8. Proposed Light Infantry Brigade Structure

A crucial determinant of the force structure recommended within the thesis was the need for the force to be capable of simultaneous shaping and EAS actions as a precursor to subsequent decisive actions. By achieving that level of capability the Army could be considered capable of conducting MOLE operations successfully within the ROI. The light infantry model focuses on maneuvering company and battalion sized

forces from strategically located forward bases or platforms by air or amphibiously. The priority is a force structured to perform the shaping and EAS actions of MOLE that can command itself from a central HQ, that is familiar with all aspects of its internal capabilities and is trained to deploy at short notice by either air or amphibiously.

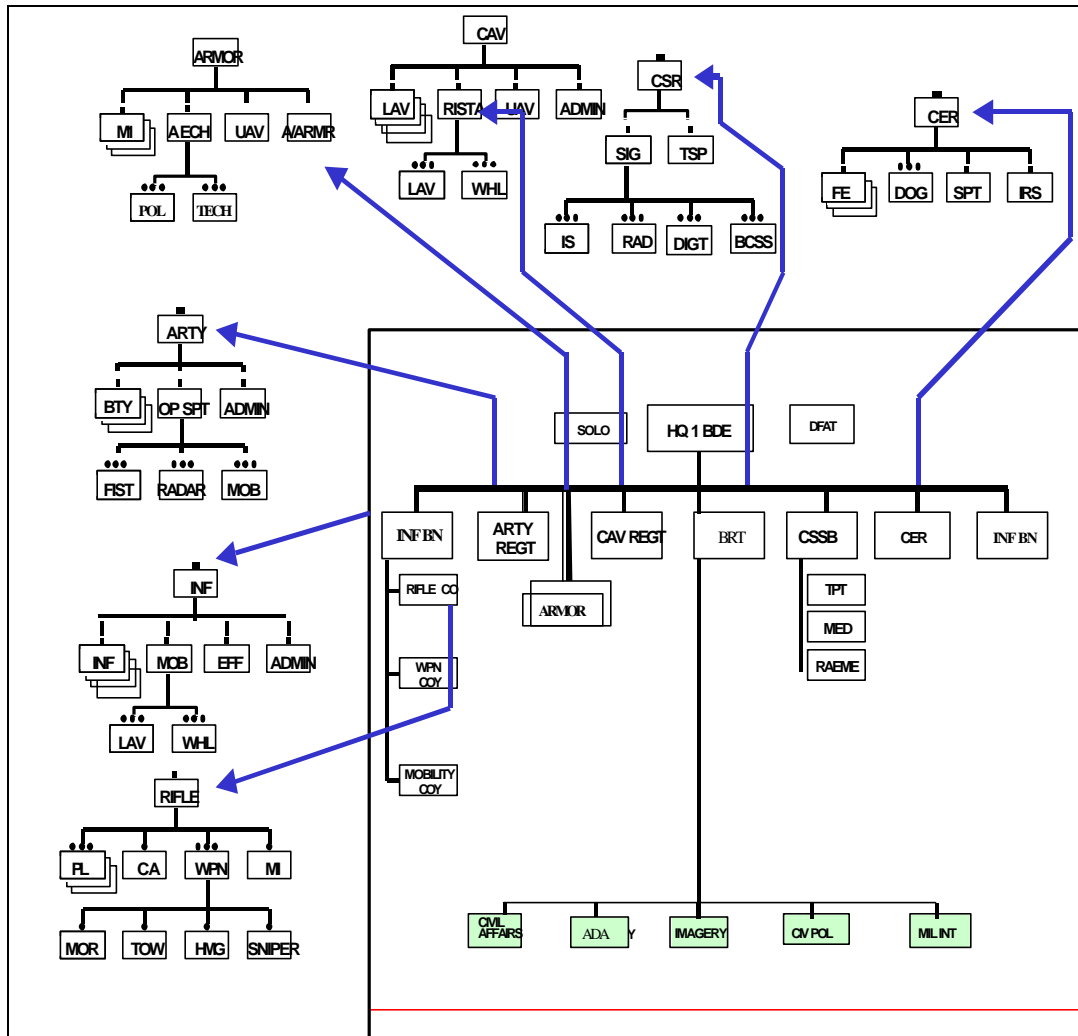


Figure 9. Proposed Mechanized Brigade Structure

The force structure recommended for the medium-weight brigade force is a reflection of the likely tasks that such a force could expect within the region. Mechanized infantry, supported by armored cavalry providing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, and armored engineers to provide mobility and enhanced survivability, makes this force an extremely capable alternative for DA in the region. The addition of armored vehicles, particularly tanks, provides the force with greater protection and firepower for operations in the increasingly complex terrain of the ROI. The use of asymmetric tactics by regional threat forces against the ADF is likely as these forces seek methods of operations that challenge the strengths of the ADF. The brigade is also to be commanded from a central headquarters, and be capable of performing the EAS and DA actions of MOLE. The force should be held at short notice readiness and be trained to deploy by both strategic air and amphibious lift. Both brigades will be rounded out with additional capabilities, tailored to suit the specific contingency.

Equipment Recommendations

Tactical Maneuver Recommendations

To enable the recommended force structure to successfully perform shaping and EAS actions simultaneously as a prelude to subsequent DA requires a force that is equipped to achieve mobility, protection, and survivability. Operations in the ROI and in a coalition force supporting wider national interests have perhaps driven the government to endorse the replacement of the Leopard 1 fleet. This argument has merit as all peer nations in the region have a platform that is equal or superior to the Leopard 1. The choice of the M1 demonstrated that the government was determined that the successful variant must come with sufficient additional equipment to enable tanks to operate and be

supportable within the current CSS systems. Obviously the decision to purchase the M1 will have a significant impact on the Army logistics system, as these vehicles will require a new variants of transport, fuelling platforms, and servicing and replenishment variants.

There is a down side to the decision to purchase the M1 tank. No other armored variant within the Army is as capable as the M1 tank. The Army is overdue to provide a replacement vehicle for the M113 as even the upgraded variant cannot survive a direct hit from a shoulder-fired antiarmor system such as the multistage RPG-7. Recent experience from the Gulf indicates the relative ease of procuring these weapons and their effectiveness against all armored and light vehicle variants, including the M1 Abrams, M2 Bradley and Stryker variants. As John Jorsett, writing in the *Free Republic*, public website notes: “The RPG-7V1 fires three types of ammunition and is arguably the most power handheld anti-tank weapon on the market. The plain high-explosive warhead is capable of penetrating 600mm of steel armor (twice as powerful as an RPG-7) and the tandem warhead (designed to penetrate explosive reactive armor on tanks) is even more powerful. If hit by either warhead, a Stryker Combat Vehicle would be risk being completely demolished. RPG-7V1s are highly favored by guerrilla fighters and terrorists alike and don’t be surprised if a few Strykers in Iraq fall victim to this weapon in the coming months. The Bradley is also vulnerable to the RPG-7V1, as are M-1 tanks, if hit in the side or rear” (2004, 1).

It is conceivable that any threat force operating in the ROI will have access to such weapons and therefore ADF soldiers are at risk should they be employed against them in future deployments. It is therefore recommended that the government endorse the purchase of an infantry fighting vehicle, such as a U.S. Bradley or U.K. Warrior, that is

capable of surviving a flanking or frontal direct hit from a shoulder-fired antiarmor system. The ability to sustain a direct hit from other varieties of antiarmor systems such as wire or terminal guided weapons is not required, as the addition of a comprehensive defensive suite would allow detection and enable superior maneuver to defeat such a threat. Additionally the nature of complex terrain in which those weapon systems would have to be employed, would make their effectiveness limited.

Operational and Strategic Level Maneuver Recommendations

A variety of options have been presented for replacing the current amphibious platforms HMAS Tobruk, Manoora, and Kanimbla, although the government has not committed to a specific type. The government has revealed, however, that the ships will be replaced by a combination of platforms that are significantly larger and more capable than at present. It is believed that the two ex US Navy Newport class LSTs, Manoora and Kanimbla, will be replaced by 25,000-ton variants that are capable of carrying 1,000 troops each, with landing spots for up to six medium lift helicopters and hangar space for an additional twelve and attack helicopter variants.

Replacement of the vessels is only half the solution. Specific consideration must be given to solving the command, control, computers, and communications (C4) issues of a JTF when performing MOLE within the ROI. The discussion in this thesis of the lessons learned from successfully operating the LPAs highlights the crucial nature of solving the C4 issues in the design phase.

The concept of the JTF commander remaining afloat creates difficulties for the Army if the JTF commander is also the land component commander (LCC). Improved lightweight communications for the LCC headquarters will go some way towards solving

this dilemma. Recent training exercises and operational deployments have practiced the ground component headquarters (LCC) as the JTF and this has been proved workable. However the current structure of the various headquarters within the Army requires that the LCC move ashore at some stage to command. If the Army were to adopt the recommendation of this thesis to fully man and employ medium and light ‘niche brigades’ for MOLE, then employing the DJFHQ as the JTF headquarters should also be endorsed.

The LCC could then deploy ashore when required, allowing the DJFHQ commander to retain control afloat. It is recommended that the C4 fit of the replacement amphibious vessels allow for both the JTF staff and the LCC staff to have discrete operations and planning areas sufficiently separated to allow command of the current operation and planning of future operation. This is an identified deficiency of the current layout on the LPAs, especially when the DJFHQ is embarked as the JTF HQ.

The concept of infantry brigades based on a light or medium structure tailored with a mix of artillery, cavalry, armor, and service support, all amphibious capable and trained to operate in concert, will provide a force capable to prosecute a wide variety of operations. As the CA notes in his essay *Land Force for the future*: “In broad terms, if we incorporate the characteristics of rapid deployment, adaptability, lethal fires and acute situational awareness, we will have developed the kind of joint force that can decisively contribute to success in the range of operations that we are likely to face” (Leahy 2002, 27).

This thesis identified that the degree of threat to Australia and the region posed by threat groups in SE Asia with links to worldwide terror organizations was significant. To

effectively operate against such a threat with the current force structure of the Army when performing MOLE requires the addition of specialist capabilities to the existing brigade structures. The inclusion of civilian and military police, civil affairs, military intelligence personnel, psychological operations, DFAT specialists, and engineer personnel will enable the ADF to interact with the existing government and civil agencies that have been established, and allow a smoother transition to subsequent stabilization operations.

Analysis of the implications of the Defence Update 2003 identified that government guidance to transition to a force structure that is flexible, has improved mobility, is capable of high levels of readiness, and is self-sustaining would have force structure implications. Analysis in this thesis concludes that the government guidance did not reduce the effectiveness of MOLE as a suitable concept for littoral maneuver in the ROI. What it did was emphasize how crucial synchronization would be throughout MOLE's four phases. Analysis indicated that the existing brigade structures are insufficiently manned with specialists. Inclusion of those specialists will enhance the capability of the brigade to conduct MOLE's actions, while establishing conditions for the conduct of economy of force operations. The inclusion of a JTF style HQ based on a DJFHQ will improve the force's capacity to command and control multiple shaping and entry operations across the actions of MOLE.

Ultimately, the force structure recommended in this thesis is based upon analysis of a number of contributing factors: a consideration of the threat that exists within the ROI, analysis of the characteristics and capabilities of government, civil and infrastructure agencies within the ROI, a comparison of the Australian Army's existing

force structure with other coalition forces, and analysis of the Defence Update 2003 and the MOLE concept. The force structure recommendations that are noted within this chapter are recorded to generate further discussion and analysis on this subject. The implication is that, as improved and more capable capital systems are accepted into service, the Australian Army's capacity to perform MOLE will be greatly enhanced.

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